

DGuzik 06 Joshua

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Book 6 of Bible Commentary: David Guzik



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1

After Moses the LORD's servant died, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant:

Guzik - Joshua 1:1-18

Joshua 1 - God's Commission to Joshua

A. Introduction: A survey of the history of Israel from Egypt to Canaan.

1. Israel was delivered from Egypt's degrading bondage.

a. These were historical events, but they were not *only* historical. God speaks through history to give an example of our deliverance from the degrading bondage of sin (as Paul makes clear in 1Co. 10:6 and 10:11).

b. The central act of redemption in the New Testament is the work of Jesus on the cross.

The central act of redemption in the Old Testament is the deliverance of Israel from Egypt.

2. Israel, led by Moses, wandered in the Sinai wilderness.

a. During that time, Israel experienced supernatural providence such as the supply of manna, water from rocks, the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night, and so forth.

b. During that time, they also received Divine revelation - the Mosaic Law. God communicated to them His holy standard.

3. The land of Canaan represents the *destination* of God's people after they have been set free from degrading bondage.

a. Not our *ultimate* destination, as the famous hymns would have it. Those hymns suggest that Canaan represents *heaven*.

i. As the lines to *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* go:

I looked over Jordan, and what did I see Comin' for to carry me home?

A band of angels, comin' after me

Comin' for to carry me home.

b. Biblically, the land over the Jordan - the Promised Land - does not speak of heaven.

Hebrews 3-4 shows Canaan as a picture of the rest and victory that can be enjoyed by every believer.

i. In this sense, F. B. Meyer connects the Book of Joshua with the Book of Ephesians.

Both describe a spiritual walk of promise, wealth, and victory that are ours with Jesus.

c. This also shows that the deliverance from Egypt was only in preparation for the enjoyment of Canaan. In our Christian life, we are *brought out* of sin so that we might be *brought in* to abundant life. The wilderness is never God's permanent destination for us.

d. Even as an entire generation of Israel died in the wilderness, so many Christians die in the desert dryness of spiritual experience, never walking in the fullness of what God has for them.

4. The leader: Joshua as a type of Jesus.

a. Remember that the Greek name *Jesus* simply translates the Hebrew name *Joshua*. Their names are identical. Whatever Israel received in the Promised Land, they received through the hand of Joshua; whatever we receive from God we receive through Jesus Christ, our Joshua.

B. God commissions Joshua's work.

1. (1) Moses is dead, and God speaks to Joshua.

After the death of Moses the servant of the

LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying: a. **After the death of Moses:** Moses (who exemplified the law of God) could not lead

Israel into the land of promise and rest. This all happens **after the death of Moses.**

b. **The LORD spoke to Joshua:** Joshua - who was not a young man at this time - had spent his entire career previously as the **assistant** of Moses, now finds that it is his own time to lead, but only after God prepared him.

c. **Moses' assistant:** Joshua was prepared by faithful service in small things, in being Moses' assistant. Redpath tells of a motto over a kitchen sink: "Divine service is conducted here three times daily." The motto is true, and great men and women are prepared by faithfulness to the small things.

2. (2-3) **Am giving and have given.**

"Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them; the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses."

a. **Your foot . . . I have given you:** Entrance into the land of Canaan was entrusted to a representative. Joshua was the trustee of the land for the people. In the same way, our representative Jesus goes before us and what we have in God we possess in Him.

b. **I have given you:** The whole land was given, but they could only possess that which they claimed (**every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given**

you). What they took must be fought for against a determined opposition.

i. God certainly could have simply eliminated all their enemies with a mere thought; but

He calls Israel into partnership with Himself to see His will done.

ii. Because taking the land took *effort*, the challenge ahead was not for those content

with Egypt, but for those who would press ahead for what God had called them to.

3. (4-5) The promise: victory is assured because Joshua is called by God.

From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. No man shall *be able to* stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you.

a. **From the wilderness . . . As far as the great river:**

The precise territory of the land is described. This was no "pie in the sky"

promise. It described real land with real boundaries.

b. **I will be with you:** Victory is assured not because Joshua is a great leader, or because Israel is a great nation, but because God is a great God, and He says to Joshua, **I will be with you**. This is enough for any man seeking to do God's will.

4. (6-9) The conditions of the promise of victory.

Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, that you may

observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn

from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it.

For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not

commanded you? Be strong and of good

courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go.

a. **Be strong and very courageous:** Joshua is called to boldness in God. This exposes Joshua's weakness; there was a *need* for such a command, because even a great leader like Joshua needed such encouragement.

i. This bold courage would not be in Joshua himself, but in God. We can be full of self-confidence that will take us to ruin, but we should instead be full of a genuine God-confidence.

b. **That you may observe to do according to all the law:** Joshua must take great care to observe the law. God's word and Joshua's commitment to it would be the pillars supporting his success.

c. Joshua did not only need to read God's word. It had to be on his *lips* (**shall not depart from your mouth**), in his *mind* (**meditate in it day and night**), and he had to *do* it (**observe to do according to all that is written**).

d. **For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success:** God's Word so lived is a guarantee of Christian success. Not that it promises a life without problems, but it does insure a life able to deal with anything, because it takes full advantage of God's presence and promises.

i. And *Christian* success is not measured by the same standards as the world's success.

Even if the world accounts us as *sheep for the slaughter*, we are actually *more than conquerors through Him who loved us* (Rom. 8:36-37).

e. **For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go:** The final encouragement, repeated from Jos. 1:5, reminds us that Joshua's success did not depend solely on his ability to keep God's Word. It depended even more on God's presence with

him.

C. Preparations to cross the Jordan.

1. (10-11) Command to the officers.

Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, "Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.'"

a. **For within three days:** The waiting for God is often the most difficult part for us, but days of waiting are always days of preparation in God's work. There is no *wasted* time with God.

2. (12-15) Reminder to the eastern tribes.

And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke, saying,

"Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD

your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.' Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them, until the LORD has given your brethren rest, as He *gave* you, and they also have taken possession of the land

which the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it, which Moses the Lord's servant gave you on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise."

a. **And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke:** These tribes which decided to settle on the east side of the Jordan river (land that Israel had already conquered) had promised to cross over and help the rest of the nation take the land on the west side of the Jordan river (Num. 32:16-32).

b. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and

help them: This same principle operates in the Body of Christ. When one member has a need, it is the common need of the body (1Co. 12:25-26). We should never refuse to help a brother in need because *our* own state is settled.

3. (16-18) The eastern tribes promise their allegiance to Joshua.

So they answered Joshua, saying, "All that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. Just as we heeded Moses in all things, so we will heed you. Only the LORD your God be with you, as He was with Moses.

Whoever rebels against your command and does not heed your words, in all that you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and of good courage."

a. All you command us we will do, and

wherever you send us we will go: Here we see Israel in the kind of unity as a nation that was essential to fulfill God's calling and promise for them. They overcame the temptation to see the eastern tribes as separate from the rest of Israel.

b. Just as we heeded Moses in all things, so we will heed you: The willingness of the people to receive Joshua as their leader,

replacing Moses, was a confirmation of the LORD's words to Joshua previously in the chapter.

c. Only be strong and of good courage: The representatives from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh say the same thing to Joshua

that he heard from the Lord in Jos. 1:6. This must have been a confirmation of God's word to Joshua when they said it. God loves to *confirm* His word to us.

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2 “Moses my servant is dead. Get ready! Cross the Jordan River! Lead these people into the land which I am ready to hand over to them. **3** I am handing over to you every place you set foot, as I promised Moses. **4** Your territory will extend from the wilderness in the south to Lebanon in the north. It will extend all the way to the great River Euphrates in the east (including all of Syria) and all the way to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. **5** No one will be able to resist you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not abandon you or leave you alone. **6** Be strong and brave! You must lead these people in the conquest of this land that I solemnly promised their ancestors I would hand over to them. **7** Make sure you are very strong and brave!

Carefully obey all the law my servant Moses charged you to keep! Do not swerve from it to the right or to the left, so that you may be successful in all you do. **8** This law scroll must not leave your lips! You must memorize it day and night so you can carefully obey all that is written in it.

Then you will prosper and be successful. **9** I repeat, be strong and brave! Don’t be afraid and don’t panic, for I, the LORD your God, am with you in all you do.”

10 Joshua instructed the leaders of the people: **11** “Go through the camp and command the people, ‘Prepare your supplies, for within three days you will cross the Jordan River and begin the conquest of the land the LORD your God is ready to hand over to you.’”

12 Joshua told the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh: **13** “Remember what Moses the LORD’s servant commanded you. The LORD your God is giving you a place to settle and is handing this land over to you.

14 Your wives, children and cattle may stay in the land that Moses assigned to you east of the Jordan River. But all you warriors must cross over armed for battle ahead of your brothers. You must help them **15** until the LORD

gives your brothers a place like yours to settle and they conquer the land the LORD your God is ready to hand over to them. Then you may go back to your allotted land and occupy the land Moses the LORD's servant assigned you east of the Jordan."

16 They told Joshua, "We will do everything you say. We will go wherever you send us. **17** Just as we obeyed Moses, so we will obey you. But may the LORD your God be with you as he was with Moses! **18** Any man who rebels against what you say and does not obey all your commands will be executed. But be strong and brave!"

1 Joshua son of Nun sent two spies out from Shittim secretly and instructed them: "Find out what you can about the land, especially Jericho." They stopped at the house of a prostitute named Rahab and spent the night there.

Guzik - Joshua 2:1-24

Joshua 2 - The Salvation of Rahab

A. Spies sent to the city of Jericho.

1. (1a) Joshua sends forth spies.

Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho."

a. Remember that all this takes place during the three days Joshua has commanded the nation to wait on the banks of the Jordan (Jos. 1:11).

God has a special purpose for these three days.

b. **Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly:** This kind of careful preparation shows faithfulness, not a lack of faith. God's promises of success to us should never lull us into inaction. They should spur us on to a step out in godly activity.

i. We aren't told who the two spies are, but Jewish tradition - speculation, really - says they were faithful Caleb and the High Priest Eliezer.

c. **To spy secretly:** Joshua also shows wisdom by sending them **secretly**. The last spies that went out publicly turned

out badly for Israel, when a majority of the spies came back with a discouraging report (Numbers 13).

d. **Go, view the land, especially Jericho:** God has greater things in mind for this spy mission; it will fail as a mission of military reconnaissance, but it will succeed in God's purpose.

2. (1b) The spies at Rahab's house.

So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there.

a. **Came to the house of a harlot named**

Rahab: Through the history of Christianity, it has embarrassed some Bible interpreters that these two spies went to the house of a

prostitute. Some have tried to say that Rahab was simply an "innkeeper," but the language is clear enough. She was a **harlot**.

i. In the second century Origen wrote: "As the first Joshua sent his spies before him and they were received into the harlot's house, so the second Joshua sent his forerunners, whom the publicans and harlots gladly received".

ii. It is great when sinners receive Jesus; not those who deny their sinfulness or don't know what they are capable of apart from Jesus - the gospel is for those who know they are sinners.

b. **And lodged there:** Why did they go to the harlot's house? Though it was an awkward place, it must be admitted that it was a perfect place to hide out and remain anonymous, and this was necessary because the city was on strict guard.

i. There isn't even the hint of immorality with Rahab. Anyone who assumes that there was immoral conduct forces their own bias

on the text.

3. (2-7) Rahab hides and protects the spies.

And it was told the king of Jericho, saying,

"Behold, men have come here tonight from the children of Israel to search out the country." So the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who have

entered your house, for they have come to

search out all the country." Then the woman took the two men and hid them. So she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they *were* from. And it happened as the gate was being shut, when it was dark, that the men went out. Where the men went I do not know; pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them." (But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order on the roof.) Then the men pursued them by the road to the Jordan, to the fords. And as soon as those who pursued them had gone out, they shut the gate.

a. Then the woman took the two men and

hid them: In the culture of that day, there was a strong tradition of hospitality. If someone was a guest in your house, you had a strong

duty to protect them and care for them. Even considering this, Rahab went much further than the respect of cultural traditions regarding hospitality. She put her own life on the line for these men.

b. Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from: The Bible

simply *reports* Rahab's lie; it does not praise it or excuse it. Perhaps if she had beforehand determined in her heart to not lie in obedience to God, He would have made a way for her to

preserve the life of the spies *without* lying.

c. Rahab's lie is not justified, but it does show courage. Consider that she was a pagan sinner in a city and culture

wholly given over to the worship of false gods and immorality, with no previous contact with the word of God or the things of God. What is your excuse?

B. Salvation for Rahab.

1. (8-14) Rahab's confession of faith.

Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, and said to the men: "I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the

inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who *were* on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. And as soon as we heard *these things*, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD your God, He *is* God in heaven above and on earth beneath. Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the LORD, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show

kindness to my father's house, and give me a true token, and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death." So the men answered her, "Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you."

a. **I know that the LORD has given you the land:** This surprising outburst of faith shows how God had a plan in bringing Rahab and the spies together. It is the same kind of thing we see when God supernaturally brings us to people who are believers or open to the gospel.

b. Rahab's declaration **He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath** is proof of her faith. It is not strong faith and it is not perfect faith, but her faith is commendable nonetheless (Heb. 11:31 and Jam. 2:25).

i. We may be appalled at the fact that Rahab was a prostitute, or that she was a liar. But the fact is that she was not saved by her works, but by her faith. She knew who God was, she knew who she was, and she trusted God for her very life.

c. **That you also will show kindness to my father's house:** Rahab's desire to see her family saved, and the length she goes to in order to save their lives shows that her love should be noticed, as well as her faith.

d. **Swear to me by the LORD:** This shows that Rahab longed for assurance by asked for an oath. She *wanted* to leave her sinful life and culture and come with God's people.

2. (15-21) The means of Rahab's salvation: the scarlet cord. Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house *was* on the city wall; she dwelt on the wall. And she said to them, "Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you. Hide there three days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way." So the men said to her: "We *will be* blameless of this oath of yours which you have made us swear, unless, *when* we come into the land, you bind this line of scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household to your own home. So it shall be *that* whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood *shall be* on his own head, and we *will be* guiltless. And whoever is with you in the house, his blood *shall be* on our head if a hand is laid on him. And if you tell this business of ours, then we will be free from your oath which you made us swear." Then she said, "According to your words, so *be* it." And she sent them away, and they departed. And she bound the scarlet cord in the window.

a. **Bind this scarlet cord in the window:** This was the signal to the army of Israel that the people in this home were to be spared.

Despite Rahab's desire, despite her faith, despite the promises of these spies, she would have perished unless she put her trust in a blood red cord cast down from her window.

Without the scarlet cord, she could not have been saved.

i. As early as the first century, commentators such as Clement of Rome, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Origen and more saw **this scarlet cord** as a symbol of the blood of Jesus.

b. **And she bound the scarlet cord in the**

window: Rahab *immediately* put her faith into both the identification and safety of the scarlet cord. She also trusted in the ones who made the promise about the scarlet cord (**according to your words, so be it**).

i. Joshua would be a savior for Rahab, but a judge of the rest of Jericho. In the same

way Jesus is a savior for those who trust Him, but a judge for those who reject Him.

c. Rahab's destiny was to marry one of the princes of Judah and be found in the lineage of King and David and Jesus Himself.

3. (22-24) Mission accomplished.

They departed and went to the mountain, and stayed there three days until the pursuers returned. The pursuers sought *them* all along the way, but did not find *them*. So the two men returned, descended from the mountain, and

crossed over; and they came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all that had befallen them. And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us."

a. **And told him all that had befallen them:** Considering how God will have them conquer the city of Jericho, how did the information from these spies help in the battle for Jericho?

Jericho was one of the strongest and most heavily fortified cities of Canaan; if Israel could conquer it, the whole land would be before them - but how did this reconnaissance help them with the eventual battle? It didn't help them at all!

b. **Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the**

inhabitants of the country are

fainthearted because of us: The reconnaissance mission didn't help with military strategy, but it did help in encouraging the faith of these spies and the whole nation. This was far more important than a good battle plan.

i. There was another purpose at work in sending the spies: to save Rahab. In this, we see the extent God goes to in bringing one woman and her father's house to salvation - Someone seemingly "impossible" to save.

ii. You may know some that seem "impossible" to save, but God's hand is not short to save people like Rahab, and He can work in amazing ways to bring salvation.

© 2001 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** The king of Jericho received this report: "Note well!

Israelite men have come here tonight to spy on the land."

3 So the king of Jericho sent this order to Rahab: "Turn over the men who came to you - the ones who came to your house - for they have come to spy on the whole land!" **4** But the woman hid the two men and replied, "Yes, these men were clients of mine, but I didn't know where they came from. **5** When it was time to shut the city gate for the night, the men left. I don't know where they were heading. Chase after them quickly, for you have time to catch them!" **6** (Now she had taken them up to the roof and had hidden them in the stalks of flax she had spread out on the roof.) **7** Meanwhile the king's men tried to find them on the road to the Jordan River near the fords. The city gate was shut as soon as they set out in pursuit of them.

8 Now before the spies went to sleep, Rahab went up to the roof. **9** She said to the men, "I know the LORD is handing this land over to you. We are absolutely terrified of you, and all who live in the land are cringing before you. **10** For we heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you left Egypt and how you annihilated the two Amorite kings, Sihon and Og, on the other side of the Jordan. **11** When we heard the news we lost our courage and no one could even breathe for fear of you. For the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on earth below! **12** So now, promise me this with an oath sworn in the LORD's name. Because I have shown allegiance to you, show allegiance to my family. Give me a solemn pledge **13** that you will spare the lives of my father, mother, brothers, sisters, and all who belong to them, and rescue us from death." **14** The men said to her, "If you die, may we die too! If you do not report what we've been up to, then, when the LORD hands the land over to us, we will show unswerving allegiance to you."

15 Then Rahab let them down by a rope through the window. (Her house was built as part of the city wall; she lived in the wall.) **16** She told them, "Head to the hill country, so the ones chasing you don't find you. Hide from them there for three days, long enough for those chasing you to return. Then you can be on your way." **17** The men said to her, "We are not bound by this oath you made us swear unless the following conditions are met: **18** When we invade the land, tie this red rope in the window through which you let us down, and gather together in your house your father, mother, brothers, and all who live in your father's house. **19** Anyone who leaves your house will be responsible for his own death - we are innocent in that case! But if anyone with you in the house is harmed, we will be responsible. **20** If you should report what we've been up to, we are not bound by this oath you made us swear." **21** She said, "I agree to these conditions." She sent them on their way and then tied the red rope in the window. **22** They went

to the hill country and stayed there for three days, long enough for those chasing them to return. Their pursuers looked all along the way but did not find them. **23** Then the two men returned – they came down from the hills, crossed the river, came to Joshua son of Nun, and reported to him all they had discovered. **24**

They told Joshua, “Surely the LORD is handing over all the land to us! All who live in the land are cringing before us!”

1 Bright and early the next morning Joshua and the Israelites left Shittim and came to the Jordan. They camped there before crossing the river.

Guzik - Joshua 3:1-17

Joshua 3 - Crossing the Jordan

A. Instructions for crossing the Jordan River.

1. (1-2) Camping by the Jordan: Israel faces up to their own utter helplessness to accomplish what it set before them.

Then Joshua rose early in the morning; and they set out from Acacia Grove and came to the

Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they crossed over. So it was, after three days, that the officers went through the camp; a. **Came to the Jordan . .**

. and lodged

there before they crossed over: God told the people of Israel to wait three days at shores of the Jordan River (Jos. 1:11). All that time, the people of Israel saw a rushing river, swollen with spring rains laying in front of them. They must have asked, "How can we *ever* cross this river?"

i. It was one thing for a few spies to make their way across (as happened in Joshua 2),

but here we are talking about a nation of

millions, with all their possessions - how will they make it?

b. At a moment like this, all the wonderful talk about living in the Promised Land can sound

pretty hollow. There is a seemingly impossible obstacle blocking the way - how will God do this one?

2. (3-5) The ark of God will lead the way.

And they commanded the people, saying, "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it.

Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure. Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed *this* way before." And Joshua said to the people,

"Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you."

a. When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it: Joshua didn't send his Army Corps of Engineers first.

Instead, he sent the priests who carried the ark of the covenant, which was the visible

representation of God's presence with the

people. Joshua knew this was a *spiritual* problem, not a feat of human engineering.

b. Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: God required that they keep some 1,000 yards behind the ark. This was for two reasons. First, to respect the holy nature of the ark of the covenant. But also, it was to make sure that everyone a clear view of the ark.

That you may know the way by which you

must go shows that the ark of the covenant led the way. Israel would accomplish this

impossible task as they set their eyes upon

God's presence, and followed only after His presence.

c. Sanctify yourselves: Because this would be a spiritual battle, Joshua requires that the people have a spiritual preparation. **Sanctify yourselves** means they were to separate themselves from common things to focus in on the

LORD, and to see that **the LORD will do wonders among you.**

3. (6) Joshua's step of faith: he sends the priests to walk across a swollen river Jordan.

Then Joshua spoke to the priests, saying, "Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over before the people." So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people.

a. Take up the ark of the covenant and

cross over before the people: We should assume that God *told* Joshua to do this, and that he wasn't working out of foolish presumption. We can also assume that God spoke to Joshua about this as Joshua was in God's word, reading and remembering the crossing of the Red Sea.

i. We see Joshua's success depending on and growing out of the promise of Jos. 1:8:

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Joshua obviously had the word of God on his lips, on his mind, and in his actions.

b. So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people: Even with God's specific guidance, and with specific guidance from His word, this is still and impressive step of faith for Joshua. Living and walking in the Promised Land comes from this kind of faith, not a slavish reliance on a "law" relationship with God.

i. Faith leads us into greater victories than law ever could.

4. (7-8) God's encouragement to Joshua.

And the LORD said to Joshua, "This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. You shall command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, saying, 'When you

have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, you shall stand in the Jordan."

a. **This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel:** As Joshua takes a step of faith, God encourages him all the way. God always wants to encourage and help along our faith, but we may have our ears closed to His encouragement.

b. **That they may know that as I was with Moses, so I will be with you:** God will make Joshua a leader like Moses in the eyes of the people, and He will do it by using Joshua to miraculously lead the people across an impossible body of water.

c. After Joshua had obeyed the previous guidance, based on faith and his understanding of God's word, now God gives him more specific instructions: **when you have come to the edge of the water . . . you shall stand in the Jordan.**

5. (9-13) Joshua encourages and instructs Israel.

So Joshua said to the children of Israel, "Come here, and hear the words of the LORD your God."

And Joshua said, "By this you shall know that the living God *is* among you, and *that* He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites: Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan. Now therefore, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from every tribe. And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, *that* the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap."

a. **By this you shall know that the living God is among you:** Joshua understands the way God connects events in our lives. The fact that He will move on behalf of Israel here

is taken as a promise of His future blessing and movement for them.

b. **Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan:**

Joshua knows that the ark will lead the way - again, this is a spiritual battle to be won.

c. **The waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that come down from**

upstream, and they shall stand as a heap: Joshua's general outlook, as communicated to the people, is refreshing. The impossible problems in their way are not seen as an

oppressive trial, but as a glorious opportunity to see God work.

B. Crossing the Jordan River.

1. (14-15) The faith of the priests and of Joshua.

So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest), a. **The feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water:** The priests begin the procession, with the ark of the covenant some 1,000 yards in front of the people, and the priests came and walked right into a river that looked like it wasn't going anywhere.

i. Who knows how long the priests stood there in the river? It might have been a moment; but it may have been a long time - but in a situation like that, a moment *seems* like a long time!

b. We usually want the river to be dry before we even make a step; but God was truly calling Israel to step out in faith.

c. **For the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest:** Joshua reminds us that this was not a time when the Jordan was reduced to a trickle. Because of the spring rains, at this time of early harvest, the river was swollen and overflowing its banks.

2. (16-17) The Jordan is stopped and the people cross over on dry ground.

That the waters which came down from upstream stood *still*, *and* rose in a heap very far away at Adam, the city that *is* beside Zaretan. So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed, *and* were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho.

Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

a. **The waters which came down from upstream stood still:** In some miraculous manner, God stopped the flow of the Jordan

River. He may have used a natural occurrence (an earthquake has often been suggested), but the *timing* of it was at the hand of God.

b. As well, even with the flow of the river stopped, it was miraculous that the people could cross over on **dry ground in the midst of the Jordan**. God miraculously dried the riverbed so that they didn't slog through marshy mud.

i. This miracle obviously connects with the miracle the nation knew some 40 years earlier: the passing through the Red Sea.

God brought them *out* of Egypt's bondage with a miracle, and He brought them *in* to the Promised Land with a miracle.

c. How did it happen? What was the key to this amazing miracle? Notice the centrality of the **ark of the covenant of the LORD**. The ark is referred to 14 times in these 17

verses. This was all about the trust of Joshua, the priests, and Israel had in the God they knew was present with them.

i. The ark of the covenant cleared the way for Israel. This was spiritual work, not work for Israel's "Army Corps of Engineers."

3. To face such impossible challenges in our lives, we must look unto Jesus, our Joshua. He always leads us.

a. Jesus is the fulfillment of the ark; He is *Immanuel, which is translated, "God with us"* (Mat. 1:23).

b. Jesus has cleared the way to victory over all things: *Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in the cross* (Col. 2:15).

c. As we keep our eyes on, and follow behind our victorious Jesus, the river of impossibility will dry up.

d. To the cynic, who wonders if they haven't tried that and been disappointed, we must ask them: "Have you really tried this? Have you truly walked according to God's word, trusted in Jesus and been disappointed?" Perhaps your disappointment is actually in your flesh.

© 2001 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** After three days the leaders went through the camp **3**

and commanded the people: "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God being carried by the Levitical priests, you must leave here and walk behind it. **4**

But stay about three thousand feet behind it. Keep your distance so you can see which way you should go, for you have not traveled this way before." **5** Joshua told the people, "Ritually consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will perform miraculous deeds among you." **6** Joshua told the priests, "Pick up the ark of the covenant and pass on ahead of the people." So they picked up the ark of the covenant and went ahead of the people.

7 The LORD told Joshua, "This very day I will begin to honor you before all Israel so they will know that I am with you just

as I was with Moses. **8** Instruct the priests carrying the ark of the covenant, 'When you reach the bank of the Jordan River, wade into the water.'"

9 Joshua told the Israelites, "Come here and listen to the words of the LORD your God!" **10** Joshua continued, "This is how you will know the living God is among you and that he will truly drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites. **11**

Look! The ark of the covenant of the Ruler of the whole earth is ready to enter the Jordan ahead of you. **12** Now select for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one per tribe. **13** When the feet of the priests carrying the ark of the LORD, the Ruler of the whole earth, touch the water of the Jordan, the water coming downstream toward you will stop flowing and pile up."

14 So when the people left their tents to cross the Jordan, the priests carrying the ark of the covenant went ahead of them. **15** When the ones carrying the ark reached the Jordan and the feet of the priests carrying the ark touched the surface of the water – (the Jordan is at flood stage all during harvest time) – **16** the water coming downstream toward them stopped flowing. It piled up far upstream at Adam (the city near Zarethan); there was no water at all flowing to the sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea). The people crossed the river opposite Jericho. **17**

The priests carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firmly on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan. All Israel crossed over on dry ground until the entire nation was on the other side.

1 When the entire nation was on the other side, the LORD told Joshua,

Guzik - Joshua 4:1-24

Joshua 4 - Memorial Stones

A. Crossing the Jordan River is finished and the ark of the covenant comes from the midst of the river.

1. (1-9) After the nation crosses over, God

commands Joshua to set up a memorial of the crossing.

And it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over the Jordan, that the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying: "Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from every tribe, and command them, saying, 'Take for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the midst of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet stood firm. You shall carry them over with you and leave them in the lodging place where you lodge tonight.'" Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed

from the children of Israel, one man from every tribe; and Joshua said to them: "Cross over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan, and each one of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, that this may be a sign among you when your children ask in time to come, saying, 'What do these stones *mean* to you?' Then you shall answer them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever." And the children of Israel did so, just as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones from the midst of the Jordan, as the LORD had spoken to Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them to the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests who bore the ark of the covenant stood; and they are there to this day.

a. When all the people had completely

crossed over the Jordan: Israel was now on the other side of the Jordan - in the Promised Land. But what is life in the Promised Land like? Is it one glorious vacation time after another? No; for Israel it was a place of battle, but most of

all, it was a place of *trust* - they knew they had to trust God with every thing they had, because the challenges only got *bigger* in the Promised Land - but so did the blessings.

i. Most of us would have wanted to rush on through and take care of Jericho - why not take advantage of the time when they are all afraid of you? But God is never in a hurry; and He knows that beyond us *doing* something, we must *be* something for Him - so He takes time out to conquer Israel spiritually before they can conquer Jericho under His guidance.

b. **Take for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the midst of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet stood firm** Each tribe was to send a representative to take a stone - undoubtedly a large one - from the dry river bed where Israel had crossed over, so the stones could be set up as a memorial.

c. **That this may be a sign among you when your children ask in time to come:** The purpose of this memorial was so that the people of Israel could teach their children about the great things God had done, so that the work of God would not be forgotten among the generations.

i. We often fail in our trust of God because we forget the great things He has done, and often the faith of our children is weak because they have never been told how great God is and how real His working is in our lives.

d. **Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan:** Joshua also set up a pile of memorial stones in the very bed of the river Jordan, so that when it was lowered in a season of drought, those stones could be seen and would testify of the time that God had completely dried up the Jordan.

i. Especially in a time of drought, we need to remember the great things God has done.

2. (10-18) The nation passes over, the priests come through, and the Jordan returns to its normal flow.

So the priests who bore the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the LORD had commanded Joshua to speak to the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua; and the people hurried and crossed over. Then it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over, that the ark of the LORD and the priests crossed over in the presence of the people. And the men of Reuben, the men of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses had spoken to them. About forty thousand prepared for war crossed over before the LORD for battle, to the plains of Jericho. On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they had feared Moses, all the days of his life. Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying, "Command the priests who bear the ark of the Testimony to come up from the Jordan." Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, "Come up from the Jordan." And it came to pass, when the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD had come from the midst of the Jordan, *and* the soles of the priests' feet touched the dry land, that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks as before.

a. **So the priests who bore the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished:** The priests stood with the ark of the covenant for the entire time it took the nation to cross over. The visible token of the presence of God had to remain in the river through the entire crossing.

b. **And the men of Reuben, the men of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the children of Israel:** The people content to settle on the east side of the Jordan stayed on their side of the Jordan, but sent their armies over to fight

on behalf of the rest of the nation, just as they had promised (Jos. 1:12-16).

c. **On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel:** God fulfilled His promise to Joshua (Jos. 3:7), raising him up as a great leader for Israel, even as He had done for Moses.

d. **The waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks as before:** The manner and timing with which the Jordan returned to its natural flow shows that this event was supernaturally arranged by God.

B. The first work at Gilgal: memorial stones set up.

1. (19-20) The stones are set up as a memorial in Gilgal.

Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth *day* of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. And those twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal.

a. **They camped in Gilgal: Gilgal** will become their base of operations for the conquest of the entire Promised Land. Therefore, it was appropriate that the first work at Gilgal was to set up a memorial to God's great works.

2. (21-24) The purpose of the memorial stones.

Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying:

"When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, 'What *are* these stones?' then you shall let your children know, saying, 'Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land'; 'for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it *is* mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever."

a. **What are these stones?** There was obviously a purpose in the memorial stones for the people of Israel themselves. It is so easy for us to forget the great miracles God has performed on our behalf.

i. We don't remember the past great works of God so that we can live in a dreamland of the past, thinking that the best days of our Christian experience are behind us. We remember them as a point of faith, so we can trust God for greater and greater works in the future, because we have seen and experienced His past faithfulness.

b. **Then you shall let your children know:** There was an important purpose for their **children**, so they would have a point of contact with God's work in the past, and remember that God's work did not begin with them and their time.

c. **That all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD:** There was also a purpose for the world, so they would know that there is a God in heaven who can work miracles, a God they should seek with all their heart.

© 2001 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** "Select for yourselves twelve men from the people, one per tribe. **3** Instruct them, 'Pick up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests stand firmly, and carry them over with you and put them in the place where you camp tonight.'"

4 Joshua summoned the twelve men he had appointed from the Israelites, one per tribe. **5** Joshua told them, "Go in front of the ark of the LORD your God to the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to put a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the Israelite tribes. **6** The stones will be a reminder to you. When your children ask someday, 'Why are these stones important to you?' **7** tell them how the water of the Jordan stopped flowing before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed the Jordan, the water of the Jordan stopped flowing. These stones will be a lasting memorial for the Israelites."

8 The Israelites did just as Joshua commanded. They picked up twelve stones, according to the number of the Israelite

tribes, from the middle of the Jordan as the LORD had instructed Joshua. They carried them over with them to the camp and put them there. **9** Joshua also set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan in the very place where the priests carrying the ark of the covenant stood.

They remain there to this very day.

10 Now the priests carrying the ark of the covenant were standing in the middle of the Jordan until everything the Lord had commanded Joshua to tell the people was accomplished, in accordance with all that Moses had commanded Joshua. The people went across quickly, **11** and when all the people had finished crossing, the ark of the LORD and the priests crossed as the people looked on.

12 The Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed for battle ahead of the Israelites, just as Moses had instructed them. **13** About forty thousand battle-ready troops marched past the LORD

to fight on the plains of Jericho. **14** That day the LORD brought honor to Joshua before all Israel. They respected him all his life, just as they had respected Moses.

15 The LORD told Joshua, **16** "Instruct the priests carrying the ark of the covenantal laws to come up from the Jordan."

17 So Joshua instructed the priests, "Come up from the Jordan!" **18** The priests carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD came up from the middle of the Jordan, and as soon as they set foot on dry land, the water of the Jordan flowed again and returned to flood stage.

19 The people went up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month and camped in Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho. **20** Now Joshua set up in Gilgal the twelve stones they had taken from the Jordan. **21** He told the Israelites, "When your children someday ask their fathers, 'What do these stones represent?' **22** explain to your children, 'Israel crossed the Jordan River on dry ground.' **23** For the LORD your God dried up the water of the Jordan before you while you crossed over. It was just like when the LORD your God

dried up the Red Sea before us while we crossed it. **24** He has done this so all the nations of the earth might recognize the LORD's power and so you might always obey the LORD your God."

1 When all the Amorite kings on the west side of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings along the seacoast heard how the LORD had dried up the water of the Jordan before the Israelites while they crossed, they lost their courage and could not even breathe for fear of the Israelites.

Guzik - Joshua 5:1-15

Joshua 5 - Circumcision and Passover at Gilgal

A. The second work at Gilgal: A radical obedience.

1. (1) The fear of Israel's enemies at the faith and obedience of Israel.

So it was, when all the kings of the Amorites who *were* on the west side of the Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites who *were* by the sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel until we had crossed over, that their heart melted; and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the children of Israel.

a. **Their heart melted; and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the**

children of Israel: Melting hearts are a great thing, if they melt unto repentance. But

sometimes hearts melt before God, and then solidify again into an even harder state.

b. When our spiritual enemies see that we are trusting in God, and are willing to step out in obedient faith - even when it seems crazy - they instantly lose confidence in their battle against us.

c. We may forget, but our spiritual enemies always remember that *If God is for us, who can be against us?* (Rom. 8:31) They know that when we are really trusting in God, their defeat is assured.

2. (2-8) The circumcision of Israel at Gilgal.

At that time the LORD said to Joshua, "Make flint knives for yourself, and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time." So Joshua made flint knives for himself, and circumcised the sons of Israel at the hill of the foreskins. And this *is* the reason why Joshua circumcised them: All the people who came out of Egypt *who were* males, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way, after they had come out of Egypt. For all the people who came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the wilderness, on the way as they came out of Egypt, had not been circumcised. For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people *who were* men of war, who came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they did not obey the voice of the LORD; to whom the LORD swore that He would not show them the land which the LORD had sworn to their fathers that He would give us, "a land flowing with milk and honey." Then Joshua circumcised their sons *whom* He raised up in their place; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way. So it was, when they had finished circumcising all the people, that they stayed in their places in the camp till they were healed.

a. Make flint knives for yourself, and circumcise the sons of Israel again the

second time: Apparently, all during the forty years of waiting in the wilderness, none of the sons born during that time had been circumcised. Now God commanded that this be done.

i. Joshua makes clear the reason why there was a new generation born in the wilderness: because the old generation **did not obey the voice of the LORD**, and take the promise of **a land flowing with milk and honey** by faith.

ii. This new generation was **raised up in . . . place** of the generation of unbelief.

God's work *would* go on, but the people of God who had unbelief would not share in it.

b. **Then Joshua circumcised their sons:** Circumcision was always a powerful act of

consecration to God. In it, an Israelite said "I'm not like the other nations. I listen to God and do what He says I should do." It was stepping out in faithful obedience and identifying yourself as one of the LORD's people. It was renouncing the flesh and the world. It was dying to self and living to God.

c. **They stayed in their places in the camp till they were healed:** Obviously, this was suicidal from a military standpoint. All the men of fighting age were made completely vulnerable and unable to fight for a period of several days, **till they were healed.**

i. Gen. 34:24-25 describes how Simeon and Levi killed all the men in a city after tricking them into having them all circumcised.

While the men were unable to fight properly, they were slaughtered in retaliation, because the prince of that city had raped Dinah, the sister of Simeon and Levi. This could have been the fate of Israel here in Joshua 5.

d. So, not only did Israel cross over the Jordan at a militarily undesirable place (right in front of Jericho, the strongest military outpost of the Canaanites), they also incapacitated their army for several days. They did this because they trusted God, and His directions, instead of their own wisdom.

i. They were put in the place where they could trust in nothing but God alone - a hard place, but a good place.

ii. God only asked this of them after He showed His greatness by the Jordan River crossing. When we remember all the things the power of God has done in our lives, we are willing to trust Him with a radical obedience.

3. (9) The effect: God rolls away their reproach.

Then the LORD said to Joshua, "This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you."

Therefore the name of the place is called Gilgal to this day.

a. **This day I have rolled away the**

reproach of Egypt from you: What

reproach? What dishonor? Their shame from **Egypt**, the shame of their degrading slavery.

b. God called Israel to a place where they saw themselves as they were in Him. By faith, they could see themselves as an obedient, trusting people, and to stop seeing themselves as they were in their slavery and bondage.

i. Of course, this is the same work God wants to do in us, taking away the dishonor and shame of our previous sin and rebellion, and seeing ourselves as who we are in Jesus.

c. How was the reproach rolled away? By their radical trust and obedience to God, by taking the specific action He told them to.

B. The third work at Gilgal: A redemption remembered.

1. (10-11) The Passover is celebrated: looking back to their redemption from Egypt.

Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho. And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and parched grain, on the very same day.

a. **And kept the Passover:** The original Passover itself could never be repeated, but there was power in its remembrance. They were to always live remembering that they were a people delivered, and remembering God's work of deliverance.

b. In the same way, we are to be in constant remembrance of our redemption at Calvary, and live our lives in the shadow of the cross.

2. (12) A new source of provision: God stops the manna.

Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.

a. **Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land:** When the people were able to provide for themselves from the rich produce of Canaan,

God stopped the manna. He didn't want them to get lazy, but to enter into a new partnership of trust with Him.

i. You had to trust God to bring the manna every day; but you also had to trust Him to provide for you through other means.

b. **They ate the food of the land of Canaan that year:** God always provides; but He is perfectly free to change the source of His provision from time to time. We need to trust in Him, not in His manner of provision, or we will stumble when that changes.

c. The city of Gilgal became a beachhead and camp for Israel in their conquest of Canaan.

They returned there after battle and remembered, finding strength in the remembrance of the memorial, their obedience, and their redemption.

i. It is good to have a place like Gilgal in our life. This is a place where we first come into God's promises, a place of memorial, a place of obedience and redemption.

3. (13-15) Joshua meets with the **Commander of the army of the LORD**.

And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, "Are You for us or for our adversaries?" So He said, "No, but *as* Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." And Joshua fell on his

face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?" Then the Commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, "Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand *is* holy."

And Joshua did so.

a. **Behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand:** Joshua boldly approaches this mysterious Man with a drawn

sword. As a shepherd over God's people, he has a responsibility to see if this man is a friend or a foe.

b. Joshua puts a logical question to this impressive Man: **Are you for us or for our adversaries?** The response of the Man is curious, almost elusive. " **No**" was not a proper answer for Joshua's question.

i. In a sense, the Man refuses to answer Joshua's question because it is not the right question, and it is not the most important question to be asked at the time.

ii. The question really wasn't if the LORD was on Joshua's side. The proper question was if Joshua was on the LORD's side.

c. The Man announces who He is: **Commander of the army of the LORD**. This is God Himself pulling rank on Joshua, who himself was a great military leader - but he was not **Commander** in Chief.

i. We know that this Being, standing before Joshua, was God. Though the title

Commander of the army of the LORD could perhaps apply to an angel (such as Michael, based on a passage like Rev. 12:7), Joshua's falling down and worshipping is inconsistent with angels, who never receive worship (Rev. 22:8).

ii. **Army of the LORD** here is used in a way that implies that the armies commanded are *angelic* armies. This is a Being who commands angels.

iii. As well, Joshua refers to the angel as **my LORD**; but most of all, the command to remove his sandals (a picture of our humanity and contact with a "dirty" world), was to Joshua (who read and knew Exo.

3:4-6 because he was in God's word) clear proof that the Man standing before him was the voice from the burning bush.

iv. The idea of Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, appearing as a man before Bethlehem is provocative, but logical. We know that He *existed* before Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2); why should He *not*, on isolated but important occasions, appear in bodily form? This idea is also evident in passages like Gen. 18:16-33, 32:24-30, and Jdg. 13:1-23.

c. **And Joshua did so:** Joshua's total submission to Jesus Christ shows that he knows who is really in charge. It also is a virtual guarantee of victory for Israel. When we follow after the **Commander of the army of the LORD**, how can we lose?

d. Why did Jesus come to Israel at this strategic time?

i. He had come to instruct Joshua in the plan to capture Jericho. Joshua will carry out a plan in the following chapter that is so improbable it could *only* have been initiated at the direct command of God.

ii. Most of all, He had come to conquer Israel - before Israel could conquer anything else in the promised land, they had to be conquered by God - and Joshua's total submission shows that they are conquered by Him. This is the missing element in a life of victory for many Christians; they have not been, and are not continually being, conquered by God.

© 2001 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** At that time the LORD told Joshua, "Make flint knives and circumcise the Israelites once again."

3 So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the Israelites

on the Hill of the Foreskins. **4** This is why Joshua had to circumcise them: All the men old enough to fight when they left Egypt died on the journey through the desert after they left Egypt. **5** Now all the men who left were circumcised, but all the sons born on the journey through the desert after they left Egypt were uncircumcised. **6** Indeed, for forty years the Israelites traveled through the desert until all the men old enough to fight when they left Egypt, the ones who had disobeyed the LORD, died off. For the LORD had sworn a solemn oath to them that he would not let them see the land he had sworn on oath to give them, a land rich in milk and honey. **7** He replaced them with their sons, whom Joshua circumcised. They were uncircumcised; their fathers had not circumcised them along the way. **8** When all the men had been circumcised, they stayed there in the camp until they had healed. **9** The LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have taken away the disgrace of Egypt from you." So that place is called Gilgal even to this day.

10 So the Israelites camped in Gilgal and celebrated the Passover in the evening of the fourteenth day of the month on the plains of Jericho. **11** They ate some of the produce of the land the day after the Passover, including unleavened bread and roasted grain. **12** The manna stopped appearing the day they ate some of the produce of the land; the Israelites never ate manna again.

13 When Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him holding a drawn sword. Joshua approached him and asked him, "Are you on our side or allied with our enemies?" **14** He answered, "Truly I am the commander of the LORD's army. Now I have arrived!" Joshua bowed down with his face to the ground and asked, "What does my master want to say to his servant?" **15** The commander of the LORD's army answered Joshua, "Remove your sandals from your feet, because the place where you stand is holy." Joshua did so.

1 Now Jericho was shut tightly because of the Israelites.

No one was allowed to leave or enter.

Guzik - Joshua 6:1-27

Joshua 6 - The Fall of Jericho

A. Obedience before the fall of the city of Jericho.

1. (1-5) Instructions for the battle.

Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in. And the LORD said to Joshua: "See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, *and* the mighty men of valor. You shall march around the city, all *you* men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days. And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams'

horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. It shall come to pass, when they make a long *blast* with the ram's horn, *and* when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him."

a. **Now Jericho was securely shut up**

because of the children of Israel: Jericho itself was on full alert; from a human

perspective, this would be a hard, if not impossible, battle. Yet from God's perspective, the battle was already over, because He can say to Joshua **I *have*** (in the past tense) **given Jericho into your hand.**

i. Up to this point everything had been more or less preliminary and preparatory. Now the real task before them must be faced and tackled. The Canaanites must be dispossessed if Israel is to occupy what God has promised them.

ii. Jericho was not an exceptionally large city; but it was an important, formidable fortress city. If Israel could defeat Jericho, they could defeat anything else that would

face them in Canaan. Again we see the wisdom of God as opposed to human wisdom, in that Israel faces their most difficult opponent first.

b. You shall march around the city: The method of warfare was one that made absolutely no sense according to military intelligence. It required total dependence on God.

i. It required great faith from Joshua, because he had to explain and lead the nation in this plan.

ii. It required great faith from the elders and the nation, because they had to follow Joshua in this plan.

c. The wall of the city will fall down flat.

And the people shall go up every man

straight before him: It was a plan for victory whereby it would clearly be the work of the LORD. Yet God gave them something to do, so that Israel could work in partnership with God.

i. Obviously, it was something that God could have done without Israel's help at all, but He wanted them to be a part of His work - as He wants us to be a part of His work today.

2. (6-7) Joshua tells the priests and the people.

Then Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD." And he said to the people, "Proceed, and march around the city, and let him who is armed advance before the ark of the LORD."

a. Then Joshua the son of Nun called the

priests: Joshua had to tell the priests, because what they were asked to do was unusual.

Normally, priests and the ark of the covenant did not go with Israel to battle.

b. **Take up the ark of the covenant:** The ark would be prominent in this victory, even as it was in the crossing of the Jordan River. Israel had to keep their hearts and minds on the LORD

who was present with them, instead of putting their hearts and minds on the difficulty of the task in front of them.

c. **And he said to the people:** Joshua had to tell the people, because what they were asked to do was unusual. This was no customary way to conquer a walled, fortified city.

3. (8-14) The march of the first six days.

So it was, when Joshua had spoken to the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the LORD

advanced and blew the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. The armed men went before the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard came after the ark, while *the priests* continued blowing the trumpets.

Now Joshua had commanded the people, saying,

"You shall not shout or make any noise with your voice, nor shall a word proceed out of your

mouth, until the day I say to you, 'Shout!' Then you shall shout." So he had the ark of the LORD

circle the city, going around *it* once. Then they came into the camp and lodged in the camp. And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. Then seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually and blew with the trumpets. And the armed men went before them. But the rear guard came after the ark of the LORD, while *the priests* continued blowing the trumpets. And the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. So they did six days.

a. **When Joshua had spoken to the people:** Joshua does not hesitate to do what the LORD

has told him to do. Often, our delays to obey God show that we really don't believe Him.

b. **So he had the ark of the LORD circle the city, going around it once:** Jericho was not a large city; they could easily march around it in a day's time. As the people of Jericho saw the Israelites marching around their city, they probably had a sense of both awe and horror.

c. It took *courage* for Israel to do this; Israel was wide open to attack during this time, and it would have been easy for the people of Jericho to attack them from the high position of the walls.

d. It took *endurance* for Israel to do this; the march was for six days, and they had to persist in something that didn't seem to make much sense.

e. In this, the *helplessness* of Israel was revealed; through six days of silent marching, they had a good look at the walls that seemed to be impenetrable - they knew that this was a battle bigger than they were.

4. (15-16) The march of the seventh day.

But it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early, about the dawning of the day, and marched around the city seven times in the same manner. On that day only they marched around the city seven times. And the seventh time it happened, when the priests blew the trumpets, that Joshua said to the people: "Shout, for the LORD has given you the city!"

a. **On the seventh day:** This march took place over a period of seven days, meaning that Israel had to have marched on a Sabbath; but this would be a work of God's sovereign grace and power, not of human works.

b. **Shout, for the LORD has given you the city!** The command was given for the people to **shout**. After the days of silence, this comes as a recognition that God

would now given them what He had promised. **The LORD has given you the city!**

5. (17-19) The command to destroy the city and to save Rahab is given.

"Now the city shall be doomed by the LORD to destruction, it and all who *are* in it. Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all who *are* with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent. And you, by all means abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, *are* consecrated to the LORD; they shall come into the treasury of the LORD."

a. **Only Rahab the harlot shall live:** Joshua is careful to take care of Rahab. Her faith in the living God would find support by God's people.

b. Joshua had to command the people of Israel to stay away from **the accursed things**. By this he means the idols and things associated with the demonic and depraved worship of the people of Canaan.

i. The severe judgment that is brought against Jericho, and all of Canaan didn't come because they were in the "way" of God's people. It came because this was a people who were in total rebellion against God and in league with the occult, as the artifacts recovered from this period demonstrate.

c. **But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, *are* consecrated to the LORD:** All the valuables belong to God; Jericho is the "first fruits" city of Canaan, and so the valuables are set apart to **the treasury of the LORD**.

B. The taking of the city of Jericho.

1. (20-21) The walls come down and the city is destroyed.

So the people shouted when *the priests* blew the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroyed all that *was* in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword.

a. **The wall fell down flat:** We are not told that Israel knew this would be the result of their obedient marching and final shouting. They may have been as surprised as the people of Jericho were at the way God decided to deliver Jericho into their hands.

b. **They utterly destroyed all that was in the city:** Why was Israel commanded to practice such complete destruction? Because the greatest sins of the Canaanites were spiritual: *When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you. You shall be blameless before the LORD your God.*

For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not appointed such for you. (Deu. 18:9-14) i. Such judgment seems harsh to us, because it *is* harsh - and we must recognize, that at unique times, God has commanded that such judgment come to pass. I may happen either through an army that He has

used (as is the case here), or through judgment that He directly brings (such as in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen.

19:24-25) .

c. Israel **took the city**: They **took**, after God had *given* (Jos. 6:2). It was clear that God gave, but that Israel had to *take* by obedient, persistent faith .

i. So it is with all victory in the Christian life - God gives it to us in Jesus Christ; but we must take it from Him by obedient, persistent faith .

2. (22-25) Finishing up the battle.

But Joshua had said to the two men who had spied out the country, "Go into the harlot's house, and from there bring out the woman and all that she has, as you swore to her." And the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, and all that she had. So they brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel. But they burned the city and all that *was* in it with fire. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. And Joshua spared Rahab the harlot, her father's household, and all that she had. So she dwells in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

a. **Bring out the woman and all that she**

has, as you swore to her: Rahab and her household were saved. They coupled their faith in the God of Israel with a willingness to follow through on what God's messengers told them to do: stay at the house with the scarlet cord hanging from the window (Jos. 2:17-19).

b. **They burned the city and all that was in it with fire**

. . . Joshua spared Rahab the harlot: In this, we see a contrast between judgment and salvation. All of Jericho heard about the God of Israel (Jos. 2:8-11), but only Rahab

responded positively in faith towards God with that knowledge.

c. **So she dwells in Israel to this day:** This shows that Joshua was written at the time of Joshua; this was not the fanciful re-construction of an imaginative writer working centuries after the fact.

3. (26-27) Joshua curses the man who would re-fortify Jericho.

Then Joshua charged *them* at that time, saying,

"Cursed *be* the man before the LORD who rises up and builds this city Jericho; he shall lay its foundation with his firstborn, and with his youngest he shall set up its gates." So the LORD

was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout all the country.

a. **Cursed be the man before the LORD**

who rises up and builds this city Jericho: This was fulfilled in 1Ki. 16:34, which says *In his days Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation with Abiram his firstborn, and with his youngest son Segub he set up its gates, according to the word of the LORD, which He had spoken through Joshua the son of Nun.*

b. This completes the story of Israel's victory at Jericho. We can learn from the things that marked their victory.

□

Faith: Joshua and Israel believed the battle plan.

□

Obedience: Joshua and Israel followed the battle plan exactly.

□

Courage: Israel followed the battle plan despite danger.



Endurance: Israel followed the battle plan over a period of time, even when it seemed that nothing was happening.



Israel *did not* rely on carnal scheming and worldly methods; their trust was in the *LORD*, not in human ingenuity.

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2 The LORD told Joshua, "See, I am about to defeat Jericho for you, along with its king and its warriors. **3** Have all the warriors march around the city one time; do this for six days. **4** Have seven priests carry seven rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day march around the city seven times, while the priests blow the horns. **5** When you hear the signal from the ram's horn, have the whole army give a loud battle cry. Then the city wall will collapse and the warriors should charge straight ahead."

6 So Joshua son of Nun summoned the priests and instructed them, "Pick up the ark of the covenant, and seven priests must carry seven rams' horns in front of the ark of the LORD." **7** And he told the army, "Move ahead and march around the city, with armed troops going ahead of the ark of the LORD."

8 When Joshua gave the army its orders, the seven priests carrying the seven rams' horns before the LORD moved ahead and blew the horns as the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed behind. **9** Armed troops marched ahead of the priests blowing the horns, while the rear guard followed along behind the ark blowing rams' horns. **10** Now Joshua had instructed the army, "Do not give a battle cry or raise your voices; say nothing until the day I

tell you, 'Give the battle cry.' Then give the battle cry!" **11** So Joshua made sure they marched the ark of the LORD around the city one time. Then they went back to the camp and spent the night there.

12 Bright and early the next morning Joshua had the priests pick up the ark of the LORD. **13** The seven priests carrying the seven rams' horns before the ark of the LORD marched along blowing their horns. Armed troops marched ahead of them, while the rear guard followed along behind the ark of the LORD blowing rams' horns. **14** They marched around the city one time on the second day, then returned to the camp. They did this six days in all.

15 On the seventh day they were up at the crack of dawn and marched around the city as before – only this time they marched around it seven times. **16** The seventh time around, the priests blew the rams' horns and Joshua told the army, "Give the battle cry, for the LORD is handing the city over to you! **17** The city and all that is in it must be set apart for the LORD, except for Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house, because she hid the spies we sent. **18** But be careful when you are setting apart the riches for the LORD. If you take any of it, you will make the Israelite camp subject to annihilation and cause a disaster.

19 All the silver and gold, as well as bronze and iron items, belong to the LORD. They must go into the LORD's treasury."

20 The rams' horns sounded and when the army heard the signal, they gave a loud battle cry. The wall collapsed and the warriors charged straight ahead into the city and captured it. **21** They annihilated with the sword everything that breathed in the city, including men and women, young and old, as well as cattle, sheep, and donkeys. **22**

Joshua told the two men who had spied on the land,

"Enter the prostitute's house and bring out the woman and all who belong to her as you promised her." **23** So the young spies went and brought out Rahab, her father, mother, brothers, and all who belonged to her. They brought out her

whole family and took them to a place outside the Israelite camp. **24** But they burned the city and all that was in it, except for the silver, gold, and bronze and iron items they put in the treasury of the LORD's house. **25** Yet Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, her father's family, and all who belonged to her. She lives in Israel to this very day because she hid the messengers Joshua sent to spy on Jericho. **26** At that time Joshua made this solemn declaration: "The man who attempts to rebuild this city of Jericho will stand condemned before the LORD. He will lose his firstborn son when he lays its foundations and his youngest son when he erects its gates!" **27** The LORD was with Joshua and he became famous throughout the land.

1 But the Israelites disobeyed the command about the city's riches. Achan son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, stole some of the riches.

The LORD was furious with the Israelites.

Guzik - Joshua 7:1-26

Joshua 7 - Defeat at Ai and Achan's Sin

A. Defeat at Ai.

1. (1) Not all of Israel obeyed the law of the devoted things. But the children of Israel committed a trespass regarding the accursed things, for Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed things; so the anger of the LORD burned against the children of Israel.

a. **The children of Israel committed a trespass regarding the accursed things:** Joshua commanded the nation in Jos. 6:18 that they should not take of any of the accursed things, those things that were associated with the demonic and debasing worship and practices of the Canaanites.

b. **The accursed things:** The wars fought by Israel in Canaan were not to be plundering wars of personal gain; they were an unusual, sacred instrument in God's hand, used for judgment against a society ripe for judgment.

c. So the anger of the LORD burned

against the children of Israel: Israel could not be defeated by the Canaanites, but they could defeat themselves by alienating themselves from God's plan and power.

2. (2-3) Spies report from the city of Ai.

Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which *is* beside Beth Aven, on the east side of Bethel, and spoke to them, saying, "Go up and spy out the country." So the men went up and spied out Ai.

And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not let all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not weary all the people there, for *the people of Ai are few.*"

a. The recommendation to send only **two or three thousand men** was either a response of faith or self confidence. In the end it did not matter; in their disobedience, they could have sent 100,000 troops and it would have made no difference.

b. Israel's success depended on their own state of being conquered by God; Achan's rebellion showed that in that respect, they were not conquered by Him - and therefore open to defeat.

3. (4-5) Israel is defeated at Ai.

So about three thousand men went up there from the people, but they fled before the men of Ai.

And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six men, for they chased them *from* before the gate as far as Shebarim, and struck them down on the descent; therefore the hearts of the people melted and became like water.

a. So about three thousand men went up

there from the people: Joshua, a wise military leader, commands the larger number

recommended by his military intelligence to be sent - but it makes no difference. **They fled before the men of Ai.**

b. And the men of Ai struck down about

thirty-six men: The thirty-six men killed were thirty-six more than were killed at Jericho, which was thought to be a much more difficult city to conquer. Though this number was small from a military standpoint, what it meant was staggering to Israel. It meant that Israel *could* be defeated in the Promised Land.

i. The defeat at Ai showed that what mattered was not the strength of the opponent, but the help of God. Without God's help, all would be lost.

c. Therefore the hearts of the people

melted and became like water: The people of Israel had good reason to be afraid. Their panic was completely logical, because if God did not fight for them, they had nothing to expect but defeat.

B. Joshua goes before the *LORD* in time of crisis.

1. (6-9) Joshua fears that it was unfaithfulness on God's part that had caused the defeat.

Then Joshua tore his clothes, and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the LORD until evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust on their heads. And Joshua said, "Alas, Lord GOD, why have You brought this people over the Jordan at all; to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? Oh, that we had been content, and dwelt on the other side of the Jordan! O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turns its back before its enemies? For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear *it*, and surround us, and cut off our name from the earth. Then what will You do for Your great name?"

a. **Then Joshua tore his clothes:** To tear your clothes and to put dust on your head both displayed *mourning*. Joshua is not only mourning the death of thirty-six men, but more so, **he and the elders of Israel** mourn the loss of the blessing and guidance of God.

b. **Alas, Lord GOD, why have You brought**

this people over the Jordan at all: For Joshua and the elders of Israel, this defeat was a national calamity. They do not take this defeat in stride; there is no "win a few, lose a few" mentality at work. They know that every battle matters, and there is always a *reason* for defeat, it doesn't "just happen."

c. Oh, that we had been content, and dwelt on the other side of the Jordan!

Joshua well knows that if God's hand of blessing and guidance is not there, it would be better that they had come to the Promised Land. If God will not deliver them, all will be lost.

i. How different from so much of Christianity today! We are often so filled with *man's* programs and power, that if God withdrew His blessing and guidance, it wouldn't be missed for a long time.

d. Then what will You do for Your great

name? This shows that Joshua's over-riding concern was for the glory of God. Our greatest disappointment when we stumble should be that we have possibly caused reproach on the **great name** of God.

2. (10-11) The real reason for defeat: Israel has sinned.

So the LORD said to Joshua: "Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face? Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. For they have even taken some of the accursed things, and have both

stolen and deceived; and they have also put *it* among their own stuff."

a. Israel has sinned: The good news was that God had not failed the nation. The bad news was that this defeat was due to the sin of Israel.

Joshua doesn't need to fear that the problem is with God - it is almost comforting to find that the problem is with us!

i. This is why God tells Joshua to **get up**.

He doesn't need to beg God to change *His* heart towards Israel. Joshua must change Israel's heart before God.

ii. God's provision is for us to live a life of unbroken victory. But He will not make defeat *impossible*, taking away our ability to choose good or evil. He always makes it possible for us *not* to sin; here, Israel sinned, but they didn't have to.

b. Israel has sinned . . . they . . . they . . .

they also: God says that **Israel** had sinned, not only one man. It is staggering to think that the whole nation was found guilty, and thirty-six men were dead, all for the sin of one man and his family.

i. Paul speaks in similar terms concerning sin in the church; regarding sin among the Corinthian church, he says *Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?*

(1Co. 5:6) A small amount of sin accepted and tolerated among believers can infect the whole group.

ii. In this sense, the acceptance and toleration of the sin is worse than the sin itself, so it must be dealt with strictly.

c. For they have even taken some of the accursed things, and have both stolen and deceived:

We should understand exactly what the sin was. Someone in Israel took things that were devoted to God, devoted either by their giving to His tabernacle, or by their complete destruction. One man stole from God, in the same way we steal from Him when we do not give Him what he directs us to give.

i. Lev. 22:14, 27:15, 27:19, and 27:31 each demonstrate that in Israel, if you wanted to keep something that belonged to God, you had to pay a 20% (one-fifth) penalty. This was the same amount required for

restitution in theft (Lev. 6:4-5).

ii. The New Testament teaches us that giving should be regular and proportional (1Co. 16:1-2), that it should be generous, purposeful, and cheerful (2Co. 9:6-8).

When we don't give as God directs us, we must regard it as sin and repent of it.

3. (12-13) The effect of the sin: they now have no power before their enemies.

"Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies, because they have become doomed to destruction. Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy the accursed from among you. Get up, sanctify the people, and say, 'Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, because thus says the LORD God of Israel: "*There is* an accursed thing in your midst, O Israel; you cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you."

a. **Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies:** Israel could not fight in God's power and presence unless they walked in obedience to God. Israel was under a covenant with God that promised blessing on their obedience, and also promised curses upon their disobedience.

i. We are not under that kind of covenant.

Our position with God is made by the work of Jesus on our behalf, not our own works.

Yet if we want God's power and presence in our own battles, we must walk in fellowship with Him, and this fellowship is hindered by our own sin and rebellion.

ii. Our position before God is secure in Jesus; but our fellowship with Him is hindered by our own sin (1Jo. 1:6). This fellowship with God is our wellspring of power to live in the Spirit.

b. They have become doomed to

destruction: It is sobering to realize that a body in sin has no power before their enemies.

It is wonderful to realize that once the sin has been dealt with, God's power can again flow in our Christian life.

c. You cannot stand before your enemies

until you take away the accursed thing

from among you: When God deals with a particular area of sin, and when resist His work, His *mercy* makes us to fail in battle. We are most dangerous when we think we are "winning" battles with our own self-reliance.

4. (14-15) Instructions for judgment of the sin.

"In the morning therefore you shall be brought according to your tribes. And it shall be *that* the tribe which the LORD takes shall come according to families; and the family which the LORD takes shall come by households; and the household which the LORD takes shall come man by man.

Then it shall be *that* he who is taken with the accursed thing shall be burned with fire, he and all that he has, because he has transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he has done a disgraceful thing in Israel."

a. The tribe which the LORD takes: Though the identity of the sinning family was unknown to Joshua, it was known to God. Secret sin on earth is an open scandal before God.

Therefore, we should therefore live our lives with "one set of books," with one kind of life that can be seen by anybody, anywhere.

b. Then it shall be that he who is taken

with the accursed thing shall be burned

with fire: Once God dealt with the one sinning individual, blessing could come again on the whole nation.

C. Achan's sin publicly judged.

1. (16-18) God exposes the identity of the head of the family that had sinned.

So Joshua rose early in the morning and brought Israel by their tribes, and the tribe of Judah was taken. He brought the

clan of Judah, and he took the family of the Zarhites; and he brought the family of the Zarhites man by man, and Zabdi was taken. Then he brought his household man by man, and Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken.

a. Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of

Judah, was taken: This must have been an excruciating experience for Achan. How much better to simply walk in obedience to God!

b. All this time, Achan certainly remembered exactly what he had taken, and how he wished he had not taken it. But he - and we - should remember the regret of sin *before* we sin, not after.

i. Sin does have its pleasures. Taking those things gave Achan a good feeling. But the penalty of sin, both within us and upon us, outweighs any of the fleeting pleasures of sin.

2. (19-21) Joshua confronts Achan, and he confesses.

Now Joshua said to Achan, "My son, I beg you, give glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession to Him, and tell me now what you have done; do not hide *it* from me." And Achan answered Joshua and said, "Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and this is what I have done: When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it."

a. My son, I beg you, give glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession

to Him: Even when we sin and try to cover our sin, we can still **give glory to the LORD** by openly and honestly

confessing our sin. Hidden sin always has a special power over us.

b. **A beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels:** Measured against the lives of thirty-six men and the welfare of the entire nation, what Achan gained was pretty insignificant. Truly, *the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows* (1Ti. 6:10).

c. Think of how Achan could have rationalized his sin: "No one will know." "These things won't be missed." "Think of how I'll be admired in this beautiful Babylonian garment." "I'm not hurting anyone." "I deserve this." The excuses can go on and on, but they all fall short.

d. When we are at the terrible place Achan is, we all feel terrible about our sin, wishing we had never done it - may God help us to feel terrible about our sin *before* we do it!

2. (22-26) The confession confirmed and judgment executed.

So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and there it was, hidden in his tent, with the silver under it. And they took them from the midst of the tent, brought them to Joshua and to all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD. Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all that he had, and they brought them to the Valley of Achor. And Joshua said, "Why have you troubled us? The LORD will trouble you this day." So all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones. Then they raised over him a great heap of stones, still there to this day.

So the LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger. Therefore the name of that place has been called the Valley of Achor to this day.

a. **His sons, his daughters:** Achan's sons and daughters had specific knowledge of the sin, because it is unlikely that he could bury so much under their tent without their knowledge.

At the same time, they were not necessarily stoned with Achan. Instead of being killed with their father, Achan's children were probably called forth to witness the judgment against their father.

i. We notice the use of the singular in Jos.

7:25 and 7:26 (**you . . . you . . . him . . .**

him), in reference to a person being stoned.

The use of the plural in Jos. 7:24 and 7:25

(**them . . . them . . . them**) probably has reference to Achan's possessions, not his children.

b. The Israelites aptly named this place **Valley of Trouble** (or, *disaster*, as it is in the NIV).

c. **So the LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger:** Even this kind of sin, when it is dealt with, can be a spring board to victory again. Now Israel was again in position to walk in the power and guidance of God, after they had been conquered by God again.

i. This kind of victory only comes after a *death*. We need to die to such besetting sins, know that *those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires* (Gal. 5:24) - the power and victory of Jesus' resurrection are ours as we crucify our flesh with Him every day.

© 2001 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai (which is located near Beth Aven, east of Bethel) and instructed them, "Go up and spy on the land." So the men went up and spied on Ai. **3** They returned and reported to Joshua, "Don't send the whole army. About two or three thousand men are adequate to defeat Ai. Don't tire out the whole army, for Ai is small."

4 So about three thousand men went up, but they fled from the men of Ai. **5** The men of Ai killed about thirty-six of them and chased them from in front of the city gate all the way to the fissures and defeated them on the steep slope. The people's courage melted away like water.

6 Joshua tore his clothes; he and the leaders of Israel lay face down on the ground before the ark of the LORD until evening and threw dirt on their heads. **7** Joshua prayed, "O, Master, LORD! Why did you bring these people across the Jordan to hand us over to the Amorites so they could destroy us? **8** If only we had been satisfied to live on the other side of the Jordan! O Lord, what can I say now that Israel has retreated before its enemies? **9** When the Canaanites and all who live in the land hear about this, they will turn against us and destroy the very memory of us from the earth. What will you do to protect your great reputation?"

10 The LORD responded to Joshua, "Get up! Why are you lying there face down? **11** Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenantal commandment! They have taken some of the riches; they have stolen them and deceitfully put them among their own possessions. **12** The Israelites are unable to stand before their enemies; they retreat because they have become subject to annihilation. I will no longer be with you, unless you destroy what has contaminated you. **13** Get up! Ritually consecrate the people and tell them this: 'Ritually consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, because the LORD God of Israel says, "You are contaminated, O Israel! You will not be able to stand before your enemies until you remove what is contaminating you." **14** In the morning you must approach in tribal order. The tribe the LORD selects must approach by clans. The clan the LORD selects must approach by families. The family the LORD selects must approach man by man. **15** The one caught with the riches must be burned up along with all who belong to him,

because he violated the LORD's covenant and did such a disgraceful thing in Israel.'"

16 Bright and early the next morning Joshua made Israel approach in tribal order and the tribe of Judah was selected.

17 He then made the clans of Judah approach and the clan of the Zerahites was selected. He made the clan of the Zerahites approach and Zabdi was selected. **18**

He then made Zabdi's family approach man by man and Achan son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, was selected. **19** So Joshua said to Achan,

"My son, honor the LORD God of Israel and give him praise! Tell me what you did; don't hide anything from me!" **20**

Achan told Joshua, "It is true. I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel in this way: **21** I saw among the goods we seized a nice robe from Babylon, two hundred silver pieces, and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels. I wanted them, so I took them. They are hidden in the ground right in the middle of my tent with the silver underneath."

22 Joshua sent messengers who ran to the tent. The things were hidden right in his tent, with the silver underneath. **23**

They took it all from the middle of the tent, brought it to Joshua and all the Israelites, and placed it before the LORD.

24 Then Joshua and all Israel took Achan, son of Zerah, along with the silver, the robe, the bar of gold, his sons, daughters, ox, donkey, sheep, tent, and all that belonged to him and brought them up to the Valley of Disaster. **25**

Joshua said, "Why have you brought disaster on us? The LORD will bring disaster on you today!" All Israel stoned him to death. (They also stoned and burned the others.) **26** Then they erected over him a large pile of stones (it remains to this very day) and the LORD's anger subsided. So that place is called the Valley of Disaster to this very day.

1 The LORD told Joshua, "Don't be afraid and don't panic! Take the whole army with you and march against Ai! See, I am handing over to you the king of Ai, along with his people, city, and land.

Guzik - Joshua 8:1-35

Joshua 8 - Victory over Ai

A. Plans for victory.

1. (1-2) God encourages Joshua and gives him instructions.

Now the LORD said to Joshua: "Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; take all the people of war with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land. And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king. Only its spoil and its cattle you shall take as booty for yourselves.

Lay an ambush for the city behind it."

a. It is often the most difficult to regain lost ground such as Ai. When we have failed at some point in our Christian lives, we need to know how to get back on track.

b. **Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed:** This was the first key to regaining victory. They had to *receive encouragement from God*. Though Israel stumbled through Achan's sin as shown in Joshua 7, they dealt with the failure and now had to move on.

i. What is past is past. We must deal with it before God in repentance and dying to self, and then look forward to what He has for us right now.

ii. God wants us to use our failures in a good way, to use them as a foundation for great victory in the LORD.

c. **Take all the people of war with you, and arise, go up to Ai:** God wasn't despondent or depressed, and He didn't want Joshua or the nation of Israel to be either. Now it was time to get busy and set about being victorious for the LORD, because He has not abandoned them.

d. **Only its spoil and its cattle you shall take as booty for yourselves:** God allows them to keep the spoil from the city of Ai. How foolish the sin of Achan seems now! He could

have had all his heart desired, if he only waited on the LORD for it.

e. **Lay an ambush for the city behind it:** God gives Joshua a plan for conquering the city of Ai, and now he must follow it. When we need to regain the victory, *we must follow God's plan.*

2. (3-8) Plans made for an ambush upon Ai.

So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai; and Joshua chose thirty thousand mighty men of valor and sent them away by night. And he commanded them, saying: "Behold, you shall lie in ambush against the city, behind the city. Do not go very far from the city, but all of you be ready. Then I and all the people who *are* with me will approach the city; and it will come about, when they come out against us as at the first, that we shall flee before them. For they will come out after us till we have drawn them from the city, for they will say, '*They are fleeing before us as at the first.*' Therefore we will flee before them. Then you shall rise from the ambush and seize the city, for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand. And it will be, when you have taken the city, *that* you shall set the city on fire. According to the commandment of the LORD you shall do. See, I have commanded you."

a. **Joshua chose thirty thousand mighty**

men of valor: This time Joshua does not send 3,000 men as before (Jos. 7:4). Now he sends 30,000 **mighty men of valor**. When we need to regain victory, they must *use every resource, and the best resources for victory.*

b. **And he commanded them, saying:**

"Behold, you shall lie in ambush against the city, behind the city." Though God had given Joshua the general plan Jos. 8:2, He left it up to Joshua's experience and sanctified common sense to lay out the specific plan of battle.

3. (9-10) Joshua stays with the people.

Joshua therefore sent them out; and they went to lie in ambush, and stayed between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai; but Joshua lodged that night among the people. Then Joshua rose up early in the morning and mustered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai.

a. **But Joshua lodged that night among the people:** Joshua was especially near his people during this crucial time of trying to regain victory. The people needed to know he was near, and they needed to follow his leadership.

b. If we will regain victory, we must *live with and follow Jesus*, who is our Joshua. He is always near to us at these crucial times in our Christian life, and always goes first to lead us into battle.

B. Victory at Ai.

1. (11-13) Preparations for battle: Joshua and the people do exactly what the LORD commanded them.

And all the people of war who *were* with him went up and drew near; and they came before the city and camped on the north side of Ai. Now a valley *lay* between them and Ai. So he took about five thousand men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city. And when they had set the people, all the army that *was* on the north of the city, and its rear guard on the west of the city, Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.

a. **All the people of war who *were* with him went up and drew near:** If Israel will regain victory, they must *take the offensive*.

They don't wait for Ai to bring the battle to them, bring the battle to Ai.

b. We often see the battle against sin in mainly negative terms, about what *not* to do. But we must take the offensive against the powers of darkness and temptation, and be busy about doing what the LORD would have us to do.

2. (14-17) The ambush works; the fighting men of Ai leave the city.

Now it happened, when the king of Ai saw *it*, that the men of the city hurried and rose early and went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at an appointed place before the plain.

But he did not know that *there was* an ambush against him behind the city. And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness. So all the people who *were* in Ai were called together to pursue them. And they pursued Joshua and were drawn away from the city. There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel. So they left the city open and pursued Israel.

a. **When the king of Ai saw it, that the men of the city hurried and rose early and went out against Israel to battle:** The men of Ai tried the exact same strategy against Israel as before. Generally, Satan will stick with a strategy against us until it doesn't work any more.

b. **And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them:** God directed Joshua to use a completely different strategy against Ai. When we see the diversity of God's methods, we remember it is because He is a personal God.

3. (18-29) Ai is totally defeated and burnt to the ground.

Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Stretch out the spear that *is* in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand." And Joshua stretched out the spear that *was* in his hand toward the city.

So *those in* ambush arose quickly out of their place; they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand, and they entered the city and took it, and hurried to set the city on fire. And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and behold, the smoke of the city ascended to heaven. So they had no power to flee this way or that way, and the people who had fled to the wilderness turned back

on the pursuers. Now when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city and that the smoke of the city ascended, they turned back and struck down the men of Ai. Then the others came out of the city against them; so they were *caught* in the midst of Israel, some on this side and some on that side. And they struck them down, so that they let none of them remain or escape. But the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.

And it came to pass when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness where they pursued them, and when they all had fallen by the edge of the sword until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned to Ai and struck it with the edge of the sword. So it was *that* all who fell that day, both men and women, *were* twelve thousand; all the people of Ai. For Joshua did not draw back his hand, with which he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.

Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as booty for themselves, according to the word of the LORD which He had commanded Joshua. So Joshua burned Ai and made it a heap forever, a desolation to this day. And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until evening. And as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his corpse down from the tree, cast it at the entrance of the gate of the city, and raise over it a great heap of stones *that remains* to this day.

a. And they struck them down, so that they let none of them remain or escape: The victory and God's judgment is complete.

Because of God's faithfulness to Israel and Israel's faithfulness to God, this is not a halfway victory.

b. Joshua did not draw back his hand, with which he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai: If Israel will regain

victory, they must *show no mercy to their enemy*, but crush the enemy completely at every opportunity.

i. We can summarize the keys for victory from this chapter:

□

Be encouraged.

□

Follow the LORD's plan.

□

Use every resource, and the best resources.

□

Live with and look to Jesus.

□

Go on the offensive.

□

Show no mercy to your enemy.

c. So far, Israel's experience is an illustration of their whole history, and the spiritual history of many Christians.

□

Obedience followed by victory.

□

Victory followed by blessing.



Blessing followed by pride and disobedience.



Disobedience followed by defeat.



Defeat followed by judgment.



Judgment followed by repentance.



Repentance followed by obedience.



Obedience followed by victory, and the cycle continues.

C. Blessing and cursing on Ebal and Gerizim.

1. (30-31) An altar built at Mount Ebal.

Now Joshua built an altar to the LORD God of Israel in Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses: "an altar of whole stones over which no man has wielded an iron *tool*." And they offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings.

a. **Now Joshua built an altar to the LORD**

God of Israel in Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses: This is in fulfillment of Deuteronomy 27-28. There, the LORD told Israel, when they came to the

Promised Land, to come to these mountains,
build an altar, sacrifice to the LORD, and read the law.

b. And they offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings: We see an appropriate act of worship, and consecration unto God, following a great victory.

God always should get the glory. Even when men looked at the altar, they would not see elaborate carvings - though beautiful - drawing attention to man's work (**whole stones over which no man has wielded an iron tool**).

2. (32-35) Blessings read from Mount Gerizim, curses from Mount Ebal.

And there, in the presence of the children of Israel, he wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written. Then all Israel, with their elders and officers and judges, stood on either side of the ark before the priests, the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, the stranger as well as he who was born among them. Half of them *were* in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law. There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, with the women, the little ones, and the strangers who were living among them.

a. He wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written: In this act of obedience we see Joshua as a *man of the Book*, obeying the command of Jos. 1:8. We also see Israel as a *people of the Book* ordering their lives after God's Word.

i. This was even at a cost or inconvenience.

The distance from Ai to Ebal and Gerizim was a long way to move all the tribes of

Israel, from 20 to 25 miles.

b. Half of them were in front of Mount

Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal: This was a beautiful place to do this, and the whole nation could hear this reading of the Law. The area has a natural amphitheater effect because of the contour of the hills.

c. According to Deuteronomy 27-28, the altar was built on the mountain of cursing, Mount

Ebal. We need the covering sacrifice exactly at the point where our sin and failures are

revealed and God's curse is pronounced on our sin.

d. This event, at this place, shows that Israel controls the middle of Canaan and the

highlands. The rest is a matter of taking advantage of this strategic position.

© 2001 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** Do to Ai and its king what you did to Jericho and its king, except you may plunder its goods and cattle. Set an ambush behind the city!"

3 Joshua and the whole army marched against Ai.

Joshua selected thirty thousand brave warriors and sent them out at night. **4** He told them, "Look, set an ambush behind the city. Don't go very far from the city; all of you be ready! **5** I and all the troops who are with me will approach the city. When they come out to fight us like before, we will retreat from them. **6** They will attack us until we have lured them from the city, for they will say, 'They are retreating from us like before.' We will retreat from them. **7** Then you rise up from your hiding place and seize the city. The LORD your God will hand it over to you.

8 When you capture the city, set it on fire. Do as the LORD says! See, I have given you orders." **9** Joshua sent them away and they went to their hiding place west of Ai, between Bethel and Ai. Joshua spent that night with the army.

10 Bright and early the next morning Joshua gathered the army, and he and the leaders of Israel marched at the head of it to Ai. **11** All the troops that were with him marched up and drew near the city. They camped north of Ai on the other side of the valley. **12** He took five thousand men and set an ambush west of the city between Bethel and Ai. **13** The army was in position – the main army north of the city and the rear guard west of the city. That night Joshua went into the middle of the valley.

14 When the king of Ai saw Israel, he and his whole army quickly got up the next day and went out to fight Israel at the meeting place near the Arabah. But he did not realize men were hiding behind the city. **15** Joshua and all Israel pretended to be defeated by them and they retreated along the way to the desert. **16** All the reinforcements in Ai were ordered to chase them; they chased Joshua and were lured away from the city. **17** No men were left in Ai or Bethel; they all went out after Israel. They left the city wide open and chased Israel.

18 The LORD told Joshua, “Hold out toward Ai the curved sword in your hand, for I am handing the city over to you.” So Joshua held out toward Ai the curved sword in his hand. **19** When he held out his hand, the men waiting in ambush rose up quickly from their place and attacked.

They entered the city, captured it, and immediately set it on fire. **20** When the men of Ai turned around, they saw the smoke from the city ascending into the sky and were so shocked they were unable to flee in any direction. In the meantime the men who were retreating to the desert turned against their pursuers. **21** When Joshua and all Israel saw that the men in ambush had captured the city and that the city was going up in smoke, they turned around and struck down the men of Ai. **22** At the same time the men who had taken the city came out to fight, and the men of Ai were trapped in the middle. The Israelites struck them down,

leaving no survivors or refugees. **23** But they captured the king of Ai alive and brought him to Joshua.

24 When Israel had finished killing all the men of Ai who had chased them toward the desert (they all fell by the sword), all Israel returned to Ai and put the sword to it. **25**

Twelve thousand men and women died that day, including all the men of Ai. **26** Joshua kept holding out his curved sword until Israel had annihilated all who lived in Ai. **27**

But Israel did plunder the cattle and the goods of the city, in accordance with the LORD's orders to Joshua. **28**

Joshua burned Ai and made it a permanently uninhabited mound (it remains that way to this very day). **29** He hung the king of Ai on a tree, leaving him exposed until evening.

At sunset Joshua ordered that his corpse be taken down from the tree. They threw it down at the entrance of the city gate and erected over it a large pile of stones (it remains to this very day).

30 Then Joshua built an altar for the LORD God of Israel on Mount Ebal, **31** just as Moses the LORD's servant had commanded the Israelites. As described in the law scroll of Moses, it was made with uncut stones untouched by an iron tool. They offered burnt sacrifices on it and sacrificed tokens of peace. **32** There, in the presence of the Israelites, Joshua inscribed on the stones a duplicate of the law written by Moses. **33** All the people, rulers, leaders, and judges were standing on either side of the ark, in front of the Levitical priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD. Both resident foreigners and native Israelites were there. Half the people stood in front of Mount Gerizim and the other half in front of Mount Ebal, as Moses the LORD's servant had previously instructed to them to do for the formal blessing ceremony. **34** Then Joshua read aloud all the words of the law, including the blessings and the curses, just as they are written in the law scroll. **35** Joshua read aloud every commandment Moses had given before the whole

assembly of Israel, including the women, children, and resident foreigners who lived among them.

1 When the news reached all the kings on the west side of the Jordan – in the hill country, the lowlands, and all along the Mediterranean coast as far as Lebanon (including the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites) – Guzik - Joshua 9:1-27

Joshua 9 - The Gibeonite Deception

A. Two different strategies of attack against Israel.

1. (1-2) The southern kings gather together against Israel.

And it came to pass when all the kings who *were* on this side of the Jordan, in the hills and in the lowland and in all the coasts of the Great Sea toward Lebanon; the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite; heard *about it*, that they gathered together to fight with Joshua and Israel with one accord.

a. **When all the kings who were on this**

side of the Jordan . . . heard about it: When the Canaanite kings heard how the LORD

delivered Jericho to Israel, they had reason to be afraid. When they heard how the LORD

gave them victory over Ai, they had reason to be afraid.

b. **They gathered together to fight with**

Joshua and Israel with one accord: This is a classic, frontal attack - they will try to defeat Israel on the field of battle, in head-to-head competition.

2. (3-6) The Gibeonites approach Joshua and Israel in another way.

But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, they worked craftily, and went and pretended to be ambassadors. And they took old sacks on their donkeys, old wineskins torn and mended, old and patched sandals on their feet, and old garments on themselves; and all the bread of their provision was dry *and* moldy. And they went to Joshua, to the camp at Gilgal, and

said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have come from a far country; now therefore, make a covenant with us."

a. **They worked craftily, and went and**

pretended to be ambassadors: The

Gibeonites will try to deceive Israel into making a peace treaty with them, though Israel was forbidden to make peace with any of the tribes of Canaan (Exo. 23:23-24).

b. Notice the methods of deception used by the Gibeonites. They were clever (**craftily**), they misrepresented themselves (**pretended**), and they even gave false "evidence" of their deception (**old sacks, old wineskins, old and patched sandals, dry and moldy bread**).

c. Beyond their deceptive appearance, the Gibeonites simply *lied*. They said, " **We have come from a far country**" when of course they had not. All their other devices simply lead to strengthen the deception offered.

B. How Joshua and the leaders of Israel were deceived.

1. (7-13) The Gibeonites explain their story to Joshua and the leaders of Israel.

Then the men of Israel said to the Hivites,

"Perhaps you dwell among us; so how can we make a covenant with you?" But they said to Joshua, "We *are* your servants." And Joshua said to them, "Who *are* you, and where do you come from?" So they said to him: "From a very far country your servants have come, because of the name of the LORD your God; for we have heard of His fame, and all that He did in Egypt, and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who *were* beyond the Jordan; to Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who was at Ashtaroth. Therefore our elders and all the

inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying,

'Take provisions with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say to them, "We *are* your servants; now therefore, make a covenant with us.'" This bread of ours we took hot *for* our provision from our houses on the day we

departed to come to you. But now look, it is dry and moldy. And these wineskins which we filled *were* new, and see, they are torn; and these our garments and our sandals have become old because of the very long journey."

a. From a very far country your servants

have come: Plainly, the Gibeonites lied to Israel. But despite their lies, they have a proper admiration and honor for the God of Israel.

Because of the name of the LORD your

God; for we have heard of His fame shows that it is *because* God fights for Israel, they know it would be useless to oppose the nation.

2. (14-15) Joshua and the leaders of Israel accept the deception of the Gibeonites.

Then the men of Israel took some of their provisions; but they did not ask counsel of the LORD. So Joshua made peace with them, and made a covenant with them to let them live; and the rulers of the congregation swore to them.

a. They did not ask counsel of the LORD: The Gibeonite deception was clever, and therefore powerful. But the real problem was that Joshua and the leaders of Israel never sought the LORD.

i. Then the men of Israel took some of

their provisions: This shows that they trusted their senses instead of the LORD.

"Look at this bread. Feel and taste how stale it is. Surely, they must have come a

long way." They walked by sight, not by faith.

ii. How much trouble do we find ourselves in for this very reason: **they did not ask counsel of the LORD?**

b. So Joshua made peace with them:

Because they believed that the Gibeonites were from a distant land, they made the treaty with them. God allowed

Israel to make treaties with distant nations, but not with the Canaanites.

C. The deception of the Gibeonites uncovered and dealt with.

1. (16-20) Joshua and the leaders of Israel discover they have been deceived, yet they abide by their sworn oath to the Gibeonites.

And it happened at the end of three days, after they had made a covenant with them, that they heard that they *were* their neighbors who dwelt near them. Then the children of Israel journeyed and came to their cities on the third day. Now their cities *were* Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath Jearim. But the children of Israel did not attack them, because the rulers of the congregation had sworn to them by the LORD

God of Israel. And all the congregation complained against the rulers. Then all the rulers said to all the congregation, "We have sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel; now therefore, we may not touch them. This we will do to them: We will let them live, lest wrath be upon us because of the oath which we swore to them."

a. Even though **all the congregation murmured against the rulers**, the rulers still knew they had to do what was right and honorable before God: keep their oath, even if it was a bad oath.

i. The rulers of Israel were wise in not allowing one sin (wiping out the Gibeonites) follow another sin (making the oath without seeking the LORD), especially in light of public pressure to do otherwise.

b. **Then all the rulers said to all the congregation, "We have sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel; now therefore, we may not touch them."** It is a mark of godliness to hold to an oath, even when it is difficult. *But he honors those who fear the LORD;*

he who swears to his own hurt and does not change. (Psa. 15:4) i. It is refreshing to see that going back on their word was not even really a possibility for the rulers of Israel. This was a simple matter, not even up for debate: **we may not touch them.**

c. Later, King Saul broke this vow to the Gibeonites and his sin brought famine upon Israel in the days of David (2Sa. 21:1-9).

i. *Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the LORD. And the LORD*

answered, "It is because of Saul and his bloodthirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites." (2Sa. 21:1) 2. (21-27) A glorious punishment for the Gibeonites: Joshua makes them slaves to the LORD.

And the rulers said to them, "Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers for all the congregation, as the rulers had promised them." Then Joshua called for them, and he spoke to them, saying, "Why have you deceived us, saying, 'We *are* very far from you,' when you dwell near us? Now therefore, you *are* cursed, and none of you shall be freed from being slaves; woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God." So they answered Joshua and said, "Because your servants were clearly told that the LORD your God commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you; therefore we were very much afraid for our lives because of you, and have done this thing. And now, here we are, in your hands; do with us as it seems good and right to do to us." So he did to them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, so that they did not kill them. And that day Joshua made them woodcutters and water carriers for the congregation and for the altar of the LORD, in the place which He would choose, even to this day.

a. **Let them live, but let them be**

woodcutters and water carriers for all the congregation: Joshua could not kill the Gibeonites, but he could control them by making them perpetual workmen for the

tabernacle service. They would serve in menial ways such as cutting wood for the sacrificial fires of the tabernacle and carrying water used in its service.

b. Significantly, there seems to be no complaint from the Gibeonites. They simply say, "**here we are, in your hands; do with us as it seems good and right to do to us.**"

Essentially, they were happy with the prospect of being incorporated into Israel, and by being made servants of the LORD, even if it was in menial service.

i. In this, the Gibeonites express the same heart David did in Psa. 84:10: *For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.*

ii. It is essential to see that they did this out of a love for the God of Israel, not out of

weakness. Indeed, it was said of Gibeon

that *all its men were mighty* (Jos. 10:2).

c. **Because your servants were clearly told that the LORD your God commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land . . .**

we were very much afraid for our lives

because of you, and have done this thing: The Gibeonites were not thrilled so much at

being wood cutters and water carriers, but in knowing they could be those things for the

LORD - and in knowing where they would be if they were *not* serving the LORD.

ii. Do we have the same heart? Can we

rejoice in any kind of service, if we see we are in the presence of the LORD as we do it?

3. The Gibeonites find salvation in the God of Israel much like Rahab did in Joshua 2.

a. Both Rahab and the Gibeonites came to the God of Israel as sinners, Rahab as a harlot, and the Gibeonites as liars.

b. Both Rahab and the Gibeonites were willing at risk to forsake their former associations and be counted among God's people.

i. The risk of Gibeon is explained in Jos.

10:4, where they are a target of attack for their dealings with Israel.

c. Both Rahab and the Gibeonites, after they found salvation through the God of Israel, had a rich history.

4. The Gibeonites after Joshua 9.

a. The Gibeonites became servants at the tabernacle, just as Joshua had commanded.

b. Gibeon becomes a priestly city; the Ark of the Covenant stayed at Gibeon often in the days of David and Solomon (1Ch. 16:39-40 and 21:29).

c. At least one of David's *mighty men* was a Gibeonite (1Ch. 12:4).

d. God spoke to Solomon at Gibeon (1Ki. 3:4).

e. Gibeonites were among those who rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem with Nehemiah (Neh. 3:7 and 7:25).

f. These are examples of the great things God can do with people who are sinners, but come to Him in humility and love.

© 2001 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** they formed an alliance to fight against Joshua and Israel.

3 When the residents of Gibeon heard what Joshua did to Jericho and Ai, **4** they did something clever. They collected some provisions and put worn-out sacks on their donkeys, along with worn-out wineskins that were ripped and patched. **5** They had worn-out, patched sandals on their feet and dressed in worn-out clothes. All their bread was dry and hard. **6** They came to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal and said

to him and the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant land. Make a treaty with us." **7** The men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you live near us. So how can we make a treaty with you?" **8** But they said to Joshua, "We are willing to be your subjects." So Joshua said to them, "Who are you and where do you come from?" **9** They told him, "Your subjects have come from a very distant land because of the reputation of the LORD your God, for we have heard the news about all he did in Egypt **10** and all he did to the two Amorite kings on the other side of the Jordan – King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan in Ashtaroth. **11** Our leaders and all who live in our land told us, 'Take provisions for your journey and go meet them. Tell them, "We are willing to be your subjects. Make a treaty with us."' **12** This bread of ours was warm when we packed it in our homes the day we started out to meet you, but now it is dry and hard.

13

These wineskins we filled were brand new, but look how they have ripped. Our clothes and sandals have worn out because it has been a very long journey." **14** The men examined some of their provisions, but they failed to ask the LORD's advice. **15** Joshua made a peace treaty with them and agreed to let them live. The leaders of the community sealed it with an oath.

16 Three days after they made the treaty with them, the Israelites found out they were from the local area and lived nearby. **17** So the Israelites set out and on the third day arrived at their cities – Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath Jearim. **18** The Israelites did not attack them because the leaders of the community had sworn an oath to them in the name of the LORD God of Israel. The whole community criticized the leaders, **19** but all the leaders told the whole community, "We swore an oath to them in the name of the LORD God of Israel. So now we can't hurt them! **20** We must let them live so we can escape the curse attached to the oath we swore to them." **21** The leaders then added, "Let

them live.” So they became woodcutters and water carriers for the whole community, as the leaders had decided.

22

Joshua summoned the Gibeonites and said to them, “Why did you trick us by saying, ‘We live far away from you,’ when you really live nearby? **23** Now you are condemned to perpetual servitude as woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God.” **24** They said to Joshua, “It was carefully reported to your subjects how the LORD your God commanded Moses his servant to assign you the whole land and to destroy all who live in the land from before you. Because of you we were terrified we would lose our lives, so we did this thing. **25** So now we are in your power. Do to us what you think is good and appropriate. **26** Joshua did as they said; he kept the Israelites from killing them **27** and that day made them woodcutters and water carriers for the community and for the altar of the LORD at the divinely chosen site. (They continue in that capacity to this very day.) **1** Adoni-Zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard how Joshua captured Ai and annihilated it and its king as he did Jericho and its king. He also heard how the people of Gibeon made peace with Israel and lived among them.

Guzik - Joshua 10:1-43

Joshua 10 - The Southern Kings Conquered

A. A miraculous victory for Israel.

1. (1-5) The southern kings of Canaan assemble for an attack on Gibeon.

Now it came to pass when Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to Ai and its king; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, that they feared greatly, because Gibeon *was* a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it *was* greater than

Ai, and all its men *were* mighty. Therefore Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon, saying, "Come up to me and help me, that we may attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel." Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king of Eglon, gathered together and went up, they and all their armies, and camped before Gibeon and made war against it.

a. When Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai and had utterly destroyed it:

The leader of this group, the king of Jerusalem, is an interesting figure.

His name, **Adoni-Zedek** means *Lord of Righteousness*, though we see him as really the *opposite* of the Lord of Righteousness. If anything, he represents the Anti-Christ, set against Joshua's representation of Jesus Christ.

i. If **Adoni-Zedek** (the false *Lord of Righteousness*) represents the Antichrist, we are even more interested to find that he

leads many nations against Joshua and the children of Israel.

b. They feared greatly: The enemies of Israel **feared greatly**, but like our spiritual enemies, they do not retreat when they are

afraid, but launch attacks that are even more bold, as a wild animal might fight when it feels attacked.

i. Though they are afraid, they are still clever. Afraid to attack Israel directly, they attack their vassals the Gibeonites.

c. Because Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all its men were

mighty: We are reminded that the Gibeonites did not submit to Israel out of a position of weakness; indeed **all its**

men were mighty.

Yet it was because of their love and honor of the God of Israel that they submitted to perpetual service in His tabernacle.

2. (6) The plea for help from Gibeon.

And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal, saying, "Do not forsake your servants; come up to us quickly, save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the mountains have gathered together against us."

a. Do not forsake your servants; come up

to us quickly, save us and help us: The Gibeonites rightly looked to the people of Israel as their helpers and protectors. They were not too proud to call for help.

B. The defeat of the Southern kings of Canaan.

1. (7) Joshua and the people of Israel are faithful to their vow to the Gibeonites.

So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor.

a. We saw that in Joshua 9, Joshua, the leaders of Israel, and all the people of Israel knew they made a bad vow to the Gibeonites, yet they did not turn their backs on that vow.

b. But here, we see Joshua and the leaders of Israel going a step further. Allowing these Canaanite kings to wipe out the Gibeonites

would have been a convenient way to get out of a vow that should not have been made, but they will have none of it.

c. We should have the same sense of honor.

Though Joshua was only bound to not kill the Gibeonites himself (Jos. 9:15), he goes on to fulfill what the *spirit* of the vow he made to the Gibeonites.

2. (8) God's command and promise to Joshua.

And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you."

a. **Do not fear them:** This is a *command*.

Though Joshua has reason to fear because Israel faces a confederation of **five** kings, God commands Joshua to not fear his enemies.

i. We can cripple our ability to fight God's battles through our fear. Though we might face strong enemies, we are commanded to not fear.

b. **I have delivered them into your hand;**

not a man of them shall stand before you: The command is coupled with a *promise*. We can obey God's *command* to not fear because we have His *promise* of victory.

i. We must therefore see fear for what it is - *unbelief*. It is an unwillingness to believe what God has promised.

3. (9) Joshua's response of faith.

Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal.

a. **Joshua therefore came upon them**

suddenly: Having the assurance of God's promise (Jos. 10:8), Joshua did not sit back to passively watch God work without his

participation. He went to great effort to participate with the work and will of God.

b. **Having marched all night from Gilgal:** This took hard work and initiative on Joshua's part. The march from Gilgal to Gibeon involved a climb of 3,300 feet, and the distance was

about twenty miles, taking eight to ten hours of hard marching, all through the night.

i. God does His work, but He draws us into working with Him. Often God waits to see our initiative, our willingness to be a partner with Him, before He does what only He can do.

ii. This is *not* the idea that "God helps those who help themselves." The idea is "God wants to draw His people into partnership

with Him in seeing His work done."

4. (10-15) God miraculously fights on behalf of Israel.

So the LORD routed them before Israel, killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the road that goes to Beth Horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah and

Makkedah. And it happened, as they fled before Israel *and* were on the descent of Beth Horon, that the LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died.

There were more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword.

Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel: "Sun, stand still over Gibeon; and Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon." So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the people had revenge upon their enemies. *Is* this not written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go *down* for about a whole day. And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD

heeded the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel. Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

a. **So the LORD routed them before Israel:** God's work, and the partnership of Joshua's work with the LORD, accomplished something great. The enemies of God were **routed**.

b. **The LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven:** The **hailstones** which killed the retreating armies of the Canaanites were obviously miraculous. The hail itself could have been a phenomenon of nature, but their aim

and timing obviously displayed the hand of God.

i. "The Canaanites, who worshipped nature deities, must have thought that their own

gods were aiding the Israelites." (Madvig) c. We notice that Joshua didn't wait around for the hail to come. He was busy doing what he *could* do in partnership with God, and God did what only *God* could do.

d. **"Sun, stand still over Gibeon; and Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon." So the sun stood still:** Seeing God's miraculous hand in action gave Joshua the boldness to ask for an even

more stupendous miracle - to keep the day going, to keep the sun from setting, so that Israel had time to accomplish a complete victory before darkness fell.

i. The sun and the moon had long stood as silent witnesses to the sin, wickedness, and demonic religion of these Canaanites. Why

shouldn't they now allow Joshua to complete this victory over the Canaanites?

e. **So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day. And there has been no day like that, before it or after it:**

How was the length of this day extended? It could have been a slowing of the earth's rotation; it could have been a tilting of the earth's axis; it could have been a miracle of reflection of light; it could have been simply the presence of God

manifested in light.

i. Whatever it means, the result was clear.

The sun seemed to stay still in the sky, and Israel was able to complete the victory.

ii. Some criticize this account, saying that obviously, since the sun *is* still, and the earth rotates around the sun, that Joshua is wrong when he says **the sun stood still**. This kind of criticism doesn't account for our normal way of speaking. We use the terms

sunrise and *sunset* without a second thought. In addition, more modern

astronomy tells us that the sun *is* in motion; perhaps the sun did literally stand still!

f. **Till the people had revenge upon their enemies:**

Joshua did not ask God to do the fighting for him, even though God did do some of that. Joshua simply asked that God would miraculously give him the *opportunity* to fight for Him.

i. When we work in partnership with God, always in touch with our place like Gilgal - the place where Israel was conquered by God - then we will see God do amazing

things; we will be able to say " **there has been no day like that.**"

5. (16-27) The completion of the battle and the execution of the Canaanite kings.

But these five kings had fled and hidden themselves in a cave at Makkedah. And it was told Joshua, saying, "The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah." So Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to guard them.

And do not stay *there* yourselves, *but* pursue your enemies, and attack their rear *guard*. Do not allow them to enter their cities, for the LORD

your God has delivered them into your hand."

Then it happened, while Joshua and the children of Israel made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they had finished, that those who escaped entered fortified cities. And all the people returned to the camp, to Joshua at Makkedah, in peace. No one moved his tongue

against any of the children of Israel. Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings to me from the cave." And they did so, and brought out those five kings to him from the cave: the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the

king of Eglon. So it was, when they brought out those kings to Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said to the captains of the men of war who went with him, "Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings." And they drew near and put their feet on their necks. Then Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage, for thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight." And afterward Joshua struck them and killed them, and hanged them on five trees; and they were hanging on the trees until evening. So it was at the time of the going down of the sun *that* Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees, cast them into the cave where they had been hidden, and laid large stones against the cave's mouth, *which remain* until this very day.

a. **Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to guard them.**

And do not stay there yourselves, but

pursue your enemies, and attack their rear guard:

Joshua will not allow anything - even the personal capture of the kings - to keep him from completing Israel's victory. The kings can be imprisoned and dealt with later.

i. We have another striking similarity with the Book of Revelation. Not only does a false "Lord of Righteousness" (Adoni-Zedek) lead a group of nations against Joshua, who has come to possess the land; but also, in the midst of their defeat, the kings hide in caves in fear of the conquering Joshua (Rev. 6:15-16).

b. The people of Canaan know, beyond any doubt, that God is with Joshua and the nation of Israel. Their respect is so great that **no one moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.**

i. Just like Israel, the church should be

feared in the sense that it should be a place where people know God will conquer them.

They should have the idea "Well, if I keep coming here, God is going to conquer me.

I'll have to submit my life to Him." Too many churches present a "harmless" God who demands no surrender from His people.

c. And afterward Joshua struck them and killed them, and hanged them on five

trees: The Canaanite kings were executed.

Joshua wants to make it clear that there can be absolutely no accommodation with these

Canaanite kings. After this pattern, we can allow no place in our lives to our spiritual enemies. All the ground belongs to Jesus, and must be taken for Him.

i. The idea of partnership with God in the pursuit of victory is again repeated in Jos.

10:25. God promises victory over all **your enemies against whom you fight.**

D. Conquest of the South completed.

1. (28) The fall of the Canaanite city of Makkedah.

On that day Joshua took Makkedah, and struck it and its king with the edge of the sword. He

utterly destroyed them; all the people who *were* in it. He let none remain. He also did to the king of Makkedah as he had done to the king of

Jericho.

2. (29-30) The fall of the Canaanite city of Libnah.

Then Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all

Israel with him, to Libnah; and they fought

against Libnah. And the LORD also delivered it and its king into the hand of Israel; he struck it and all the people who *were* in it with the edge of the sword. He let none remain in it, but did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho.

3. (31-33) The fall of the Canaanite city of Lachish.

Then Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, to Lachish; and they encamped against it and fought against it. And the LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, who took it on the second day, and struck it and all the people who *were* in it with the edge of the sword, according to all that he had done to Libnah. Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua struck him and his people, until he left him none remaining.

4. (34-35) The fall of the Canaanite city of Eglon.

From Lachish Joshua passed to Eglon, and all Israel with him; and they encamped against it and fought against it. They took it on that day and struck it with the edge of the sword; all the people who *were* in it he utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish.

5. (36-37) The fall of the Canaanite city of Hebron.

So Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, to Hebron; and they fought against it. And they took it and struck it with the edge of the sword; its king, all its cities, and all the people who *were* in it; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon, but utterly destroyed it and all the people who *were* in it.

6. (38-39) The fall of the Canaanite city of Debir.

Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir; and they fought against it. And he took it and its king and all its cities; they struck them with the edge of the sword and utterly destroyed all the people who *were* in it. He left none remaining; as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir and its king, as he had done also to Libnah and its king.

7. (40-43) Summary of the conquest of the Southern Canaanite Kingdoms.

So Joshua conquered all the land: the mountain country and the South and the lowland and the wilderness slopes, and all their kings; he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded. And Joshua conquered them from

Kadesh Barnea as far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even as far as Gibeon. All these kings and their land Joshua took at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel. Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

a. **So Joshua conquered all the land:** In a period of weeks (perhaps months) these six

cities are defeated, without a single loss for Israel. Each battle was a test. None of them were easy, but under the leadership of Joshua, they all were victorious.

i. God's desire is that we should enjoy the same life of victory. *But we all . . . are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.* (2Co. 3:18)

b. **All these kings and their land Joshua took at one time, because the LORD God**

of Israel fought for Israel: The victory was won **one at a time**. We often want to do everything and win every battle for God all at once. This can be Satan's strategy to set us up for a strong attack of discouragement.

i. As well, God knew *which* battles to fight and *when* to fight them. These were not the only Canaanite cities in the region, but they were the military strongholds. God knew what He was doing in selecting which particular battles to fight, and when they needed to be fought.

c. Most importantly, the key to victory was that **the Lord GOD of Israel fought for Israel.**

This is also true as we battle against our own spiritual enemies. We can only win as we see the LORD fighting on our behalf. He provides the victory and we walk in it.

i. We come to realize that the victory was won at the cross, and now we need to live in light of that victory. Col. 2:15 speaks to this idea: *Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of*

them, triumphing over them in it [the cross]. It is in this sense that we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

(Rom. 8:37)

ii. To be disappointed in yourself is to have trusted in yourself. It shows that we tried to fight the battle in our own resources, not the LORD's victory.

d. Then Joshua returned, and all Israel

with him, to the camp at Gilgal: Israel's victories always came from Gilgal. This was the place of total faith, commitment and fellowship with God, and the place where Israel had been conquered by God.

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2 All Jerusalem was terrified because Gibeon was a large city, like one of the royal cities. It was larger than Ai and all its men were warriors. **3** So King Adoni-Zedek of Jerusalem sent this message to King Hoham of Hebron, King Piram of Jarmuth, King Japhia of Lachish, and King Debir of Eglon: **4** "Come to my aid so we can attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and the Israelites." **5** So the five Amorite kings (the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon) and all their troops gathered together and advanced. They deployed their troops and fought against Gibeon.

6 The men of Gibeon sent this message to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal, "Do not abandon your subjects! Rescue us! Help us! For all the Amorite kings living in the hill country are attacking us." **7** So Joshua and his whole army, including the bravest warriors, marched up from Gilgal. **8**

The LORD told Joshua, "Don't be afraid of them, for I am handing them over to you. Not one of them can resist you."

9 Joshua attacked them by surprise after marching all night from Gilgal. **10** The LORD routed them before Israel. Israel thoroughly defeated them at Gibeon. They chased them up

the road to the pass of Beth Horon and struck them down all the way to Azekah and Makkedah. **11**

As they fled from Israel on the slope leading down from Beth Horon, the LORD threw down on them large hailstones from the sky, all the way to Azekah. They died – in fact, more died from the hailstones than the Israelites killed with the sword.

12 The day the LORD delivered the Amorites over to the Israelites, Joshua prayed to the LORD before Israel:

“O sun, stand still over Gibeon!

O moon, over the Valley of Aijalon!”

13 The sun stood still and the moon stood motionless while the nation took vengeance on its enemies. The event is recorded in the Scroll of the Upright One. The sun stood motionless in the middle of the sky and did not set for about a full day. **14** There has not been a day like it before or since. The LORD obeyed a man, for the LORD fought for Israel! **15** Then Joshua and all Israel returned to the camp at Gilgal.

16 The five Amorite kings ran away and hid in the cave at Makkedah. **17** Joshua was told, “The five kings have been found hiding in the cave at Makkedah.” **18** Joshua said, “Roll large stones over the mouth of the cave and post guards in front of it. **19** But don’t you delay! Chase your enemies and catch them! Don’t allow them to retreat to their cities, for the LORD your God is handing them over to you.” **20** Joshua and the Israelites almost totally wiped them out, but some survivors did escape to the fortified cities. **21** Then the whole army safely returned to Joshua at the camp in Makkedah. No one dared threaten the Israelites. **22** Joshua said, “Open the cave’s mouth and bring the five kings out of the cave to me.” **23** They did as ordered; they brought the five kings out of the cave to him

– the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon. **24** When they brought the kings out to Joshua, he summoned all the men of Israel and said to the commanders

of the troops who accompanied him, "Come here and put your feet on the necks of these kings." So they came up and put their feet on their necks. **25** Then Joshua said to them, "Don't be afraid and don't panic! Be strong and brave, for the LORD will do the same thing to all your enemies you fight. **26** Then Joshua executed them and hung them on five trees. They were left hanging on the trees until evening. **27** At sunset Joshua ordered his men to take them down from the trees. They threw them into the cave where they had hidden and piled large stones over the mouth of the cave. (They remain to this very day.)

28 That day Joshua captured Makkedah and put the sword to it and its king. He annihilated everyone who lived in it; he left no survivors. He did to its king what he had done to the king of Jericho.

29 Joshua and all Israel marched from Makkedah to Libnah and fought against it. **30** The LORD handed it and its king over to Israel, and Israel put the sword to all who lived there; they left no survivors. They did to its king what they had done to the king of Jericho.

31 Joshua and all Israel marched from Libnah to Lachish. He deployed his troops and fought against it. **32**

The LORD handed Lachish over to Israel and they captured it on the second day. They put the sword to all who lived there, just as they had done to Libnah. **33** Then King Horam of Gezer came up to help Lachish, but Joshua struck down him and his army until no survivors remained.

34 Joshua and all Israel marched from Lachish to Eglon. They deployed troops and fought against it. **35** That day they captured it and put the sword to all who lived there. That day they annihilated it just as they had done to Lachish.

36 Joshua and all Israel marched up from Eglon to Hebron and fought against it. **37** They captured it and put the sword to its king, all its surrounding cities, and all who lived in it;

they left no survivors. As they had done at Eglon, they annihilated it and all who lived there.

38 Joshua and all Israel turned to Debir and fought against it. **39** They captured it, its king, and all its surrounding cities and put the sword to them. They annihilated everyone who lived there; they left no survivors. They did to Debir and its king what they had done to Libnah and its king and to Hebron.

40 Joshua defeated the whole land, including the hill country, the Negev, the lowlands, the slopes, and all their kings. He left no survivors. He annihilated everything that breathed, just as the LORD God of Israel had commanded.

41 Joshua conquered the area between Kadesh Barnea and Gaza and the whole region of Goshen, all the way to Gibeon.

42 Joshua captured in one campaign all these kings and their lands, for the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel. **43** Then Joshua and all Israel returned to the camp at Gilgal.

1 When King Jabin of Hazor heard the news, he organized a coalition, including King Jobab of Madon, the king of Shimron, the king of Acshaph,

Guzik - Joshua 11:1-23

Joshua 11 - The Northern Canaanite Armies

Defeated

A. The defeat of the northern kings.

1. (1-5) The northern kings of Canaan gather against Israel. And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor heard *these things*, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, to the king of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph, and to the kings who *were* from the north, in the mountains, in the plain south of Chinneroth, in the lowland, and in the heights of Dor on the west, to the Canaanites in the east and in the west, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite in the mountains, and the Hivite below Hermon in the land of Mizpah. So they went out, they and all their armies with them, *as many people as the sand that is* on the seashore in multitude, with very many horses and chariots. And when all these kings had met together, they came and camped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

a. **And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor heard these things:** After hearing of Israel's total conquest of the south, the northern kings came together to defeat Israel. The huge army assembled together reflects an attitude that they believe they must stop Israel now or never.

i. All this is prompted by what the northern kings **heard** regarding Israel's success and victory; walking in victory means that we become targets - when we are revived, so is the devil.

b. Two things indicate that now Israel is facing challenges they had never faced before. First, the size of the enemy army: **as many people as the sand that is on the seashore in**

multitude. Second, the technological superiority of the Canaanites: **with very many horses and chariots.**

i. The challenges brought to Israel seem to increase at each step, from Jericho, to Ai, to the battle with the southern kings, now to this battle.

ii. We often find that the challenges facing us in our Christian life increase at each step.

God uses each previous victory as a springboard for what we face in the future.

2. (6) God's encouragement to Joshua.

But the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid because of them, for tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel. You shall hamstring their horses and burn their

chariots with fire."

a. Tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel: This attack was new, and more severe than previous

challenges. Joshua needed a fresh confirmation of God's promise for his life, and the LORD was faithful to bring it.

b. Do not be afraid because of them: This means that fear was an issue for Joshua and

the people of Israel. God has a reason for everything He does, and He would not have

assured them *do not be afraid* unless there was a reason for the encouragement.

3. (7-9) Joshua attacks the northern armies, and they are defeated.

So Joshua and all the people of war with him came against them suddenly by the waters of

Merom, and they attacked them. And the LORD

delivered them into the hand of Israel, who

defeated them and chased them to Greater

Sidon, to the Brook Misrephoth, and to the Valley of Mizpah eastward; they attacked them until they left none of them

remaining. So Joshua did to them as the LORD had told him: he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots with fire.

a. **So Joshua and all the people of war with him came against them suddenly:**

Joshua fought with *boldness* and *strategy*, he surprised them with an unexpected ambush.

b. **So Joshua did to them as the LORD had told him:** Joshua fought with *obedience*, doing exactly what the LORD told them to do, even

destroying the Canaanite "weapons" (the horses and the chariots) instead of taking them for his own army.

i. Here is a lesson in the matter of "taking the devil's tools." Many Christians do not hesitate to use the "horses and chariots" of their spiritual enemy. Perhaps they should believe that God may want them to fight the battle on a different level - a level of complete trust in Him.

c. Joshua fought with *passion* and *commitment*; he not let up until he had accomplished as much as he could (**they attacked them until they left none of them remaining**).

4. (10-15) The defeat of Hazor, the head of the northern Canaanite kingdoms.

Joshua turned back at that time and took Hazor, and struck its king with the sword; for Hazor was formerly the head of all those kingdoms. And they struck all the people who *were* in it with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying *them*.

There was none left breathing. Then he burned Hazor with fire. So all the cities of those kings, and all their kings, Joshua took and struck with the edge of the sword. He utterly destroyed

them, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded. But *as for* the cities that stood on their mounds, Israel burned none of them, except Hazor only, *which* Joshua burned. And all the spoil of these cities and the

livestock, the children of Israel took as booty for themselves; but they struck every man with the edge of the sword until they had destroyed them, and they left none breathing. As the LORD had commanded Moses his servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did. He left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses.

a. They struck all the people who were in it with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them. There was none left

breathing: The staggering completeness of the destruction (especially in human terms) shows us the *completeness* of God's judgment, Israel's obedience, and the depravity of the Canaanites.

B. Israel is secure in Canaan.

1. (16-20) Complete victory over Canaan, over north and south.

Thus Joshua took all this land: the mountain country, all the South, all the land of Goshen, the lowland, and the Jordan plain; the mountains of Israel and its lowlands, from Mount Halak and the ascent to Seir, even as far as Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings, and struck them down and killed them. Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon. All *the others* they took in battle. For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that He might utterly destroy them, *and* that they might receive no mercy, but that He might destroy them, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

a. For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that He might utterly

destroy them: We are told that in part, this judgment on the Canaanites was accomplished

when God did **harden their hearts** against Israel. The hardening of men's hearts is when God gives man up to the sin that is in his heart (Rom. 1:24-28).

b. We need not think that God parceled out some particular judgment upon the Canaanites.

He dealt with their hearts the same way He deals with all men's hearts, but God's grace either hardens the heart or it softens it.

2. (21-22) The Anakim are defeated.

And at that time Joshua came and cut off the Anakim from the mountains: from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, from all the mountains of

Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel; Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities.

None of the Anakim were left in the land of the children of Israel; they remained only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod.

a. **At that time Joshua came and cut off**

the Anakim from the mountains: It was a fear of the **Anakim** - this tribe of exceptionally large and strong people - that had made Israel too afraid to enter the land some forty years ago (Num. 13:27-33).

b. **None of the Anakim were left in the**

land of the children of Israel: Here, the foes of 40 years ago fall. They were no match for an army that was blessed and directed by God.

i. Significantly, Israel faced the Anakim *last*, only after God had trained them in battle and in working with Him through the months of conquest.

ii. When Israel refused to enter Canaan out of a fear of the Anakim, they did not realize that God would manage their affairs so they would face this most difficult challenge *last*. God knows how to manage the battles in your life.

iii. And we must *allow* God to manage those battles. All too often we are convinced that we must go out and fight the Anakim *first*, when God would have us face them *last*.

c. **They remained only in Gaza, in Gath,**

and in Ashdod: The Anakim remained only in these coastal cities occupied by the Philistines.

The giant Goliath comes from the city of Gath some five hundred years later (1Sa. 17:4).

3. (23) Complete victory, and the land rests from war.

So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had said to Moses; and Joshua

gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land rested from war.

a. **So Joshua took the whole land:** This brings us to another section of the book of

Joshua. The power of the Canaanite kings

within the land has been crushed, and in this sense, **Joshua took the whole land**. Yet, not every small town and village had been

conquered and occupied. That was up to each individual tribe to do in the land that was

apportioned to them.

b. The end of this phase of conquest was a

greater invitation to the cooperation of the tribes with God.

i. "Much territory was yet to be possessed, but it was left to each tribe to possess what potentially it had received through the

conquest of the whole people in which it had taken part.

Each tribe was to apply

individually the lessons it had learned in

united war if it was to possess its

inheritance. That the tribes failed to do so was not a reflection on the power of God,

but on the failure to take for themselves

what Joshua had given and allotted to each

one of them." (Redpath)

c. In the same sense, Jesus has already defeated the enemy and conquered the land, but He also calls us into battle to gain what is ours.

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2 and the northern kings who ruled in the hill country, the Arabah south of Kinnereth, the lowlands, and the heights of Dor to the west. **3** Canaanites came from the east and west; Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and Jebusites from the hill country; and Hivites from below Hermon in the area of Mizpah. **4** These kings came out with their armies; they were as numerous as the sand on the seashore and had a large number of horses and chariots. **5**

All these kings gathered and joined forces at the Waters of Merom to fight Israel.

6 The LORD told Joshua, "Don't be afraid of them, for about this time tomorrow I will cause all of them to lie dead before Israel. You must hamstring their horses and burn their chariots." **7** Joshua and his whole army caught them by surprise at the Waters of Merom and attacked them. **8** The LORD handed them over to Israel and they struck them down and chased them all the way to Greater Sidon, Misrephoth Maim, and the Mizpah Valley to the east. They struck them down until no survivors remained.

9 Joshua did to them as the LORD had commanded him; he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots.

10 At that time Joshua turned, captured Hazor, and struck down its king with the sword, for Hazor was at that time the leader of all these kingdoms. **11** They annihilated everyone who lived there with the sword - no one who breathed remained - and burned Hazor.

12 Joshua captured all these royal cities and all their kings and annihilated them with the sword, as Moses the LORD's servant had commanded. **13** But Israel did not burn any of the cities located on mounds, except for Hazor; it was the only one Joshua burned. **14** The Israelites plundered all the

goods of these cities and the cattle, but they totally destroyed all the people and allowed no one who breathed to live. **15** Moses the LORD's servant passed on the LORD's commands to Joshua, and Joshua did as he was told. He did not ignore any of the commands the LORD had given Moses.

16 Joshua conquered the whole land, including the hill country, all the Negev, all the land of Goshen, the lowlands, the Arabah, the hill country of Israel and its lowlands, **17** from Mount Halak on up to Seir, as far as Baal Gad in the Lebanon Valley below Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings and executed them. **18** Joshua campaigned against these kings for quite some time. **19**

No city made peace with the Israelites (except the Hivites living in Gibeon); they had to conquer all of them, **20** for the LORD determined to make them obstinate so they would attack Israel. He wanted Israel to annihilate them without mercy, as he had instructed Moses.

21 At that time Joshua attacked and eliminated the Anakites from the hill country – from Hebron, Debir, Anab, and all the hill country of Judah and Israel. Joshua annihilated them and their cities. **22** No Anakites were left in Israelite territory, though some remained in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. **23** Joshua conquered the whole land, just as the LORD had promised Moses, and he assigned Israel their tribal portions. Then the land was free of war.

1 Now these are the kings of the land whom the Israelites defeated and drove from their land on the east side of the Jordan, from the Arnon Valley to Mount Hermon, including all the eastern Arabah:

Guzik - Joshua 12:1-24

Joshua 12 - List of the Conquered Kings

A. Kings defeated by Moses.

1. (1) Introduction: kings conquered by Israel under the leadership of Moses.

These *are* the kings of the land whom the children of Israel defeated, and whose land they possessed on the other side

of the Jordan toward the rising of the sun, from the River Arnon to Mount Hermon, and all the eastern Jordan plain: a.

These are the kings of the land whom

the children of Israel defeated: The land of these kings comprised Israel's land on the

eastern side of the Jordan river, **on the other side of the Jordan toward the rising of the sun.**

b. Why do we have such an exhaustive, and seemingly tedious list? It only seems tedious to us because we do not live in the land. For

those who really had their inheritance there, these were essential matters that touched every day life, answering the question: "What land belongs to Israel?"

2. (2-3) The defeat of Sihon, king of the Amorites and his land that Israel possessed.

One king was Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon *and* ruled half of Gilead, from Aroer, which is on the bank of the River Arnon, from the middle of that river, even as far as the River Jabbok, *which is* the border of the Ammonites, and the eastern Jordan plain from the Sea of Chinneroth as far as the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea), the road to Beth

Jeshimoth, and southward below the slopes of Pisgah.

3. (4-5) The defeat of Og, king of Bashan, and his land that Israel possessed.

The other king was Og king of Bashan and his territory, *who was* of the remnant of the giants, who dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, and reigned over Mount Hermon, over Salcah, over all

Bashan, as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites, and over half of Gilead *to* the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

4. (6) The eastern lands are deeded to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

These Moses the servant of the LORD and the

children of Israel had conquered; and Moses the servant of the LORD had given it *as* a possession to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

a. **Half the tribe of Manasseh:** Half of the tribe of Manasseh lived east of the Jordan River, and half of the tribe lived west of the Jordan River.

B. Kings defeated by Joshua.

1. (7-8) A broad description of the lands and Canaanite nations conquered by Israel under the leadership of Joshua.

And these *are* the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel conquered on this side of the Jordan, on the west, from Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon as far as Mount Halak and the ascent to Seir, which Joshua gave to the tribes of Israel *as* a possession according to their divisions, in the mountain country, in the lowlands, in the *Jordan* plain, in the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the South; the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites:

a. Again, this only seems tedious to us because it is not our land. If it were our land, we would read each line with great interest.

2. (9-24) A specific recounting of the 31 kings conquered by Joshua.

The king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which *is* beside Bethel, one; the king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one; the king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one; the king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one; the king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one; the king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one; the king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one; the king of

Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one; the king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hepher, one; the king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one; the king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one; the king of Shimron Meron, one; the king of

Achshaph, one; the king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one; the king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam

in Carmel, one; the king of Dor in the heights of Dor, one; the king of the people of Gilgal, one; the king of Tirzah, one; all the kings, thirty-one.

a. These descriptions are also important because they make it clear that these things happened in real time, and in real space. These are not fairy tales that begin with "once upon a time," this is history that begins with specific places and people and rulers.

b. As well, it was a way that Israel could forever remember the great things God had done for them. "Sometimes in the course of human experience it is good to sit down and reflect on what has been conquered by the grace of God."

(Redpath)

c. With all these kings conquered - with every one of these "principalities and powers" over the land defeated - there is no doubt that the land belongs to Israel, but the individual tribes still have much to possess for their own.

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2 King Sihon of the Amorites who lived in Heshbon and ruled from Aroer (on the edge of the Arnon Valley) - including the city in the middle of the valley and half of Gilead - all the way to the Jabbok Valley bordering Ammonite territory. **3** His kingdom included the eastern Arabah from the Sea of Kinnereth to the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea), including the route to Beth Jeshimoth and the area southward below the slopes of Pisgah.

4 The territory of King Og of Bashan, one of the few remaining Rephaites, who lived in Ashtaroth and Edrei **5** and ruled over Mount Hermon, Salecah, all of Bashan to the border of the Geshurites and Maacathites, and half of Gilead as far as the border of King Sihon of Heshbon.

6 Moses the LORD's servant and the Israelites defeated them and Moses the LORD's servant assigned their land to Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

7 These are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the Israelites defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal Gad in the Lebanon Valley to Mount Halak on up to Seir. Joshua assigned this territory to the Israelite tribes, **8** including the hill country, the lowlands, the Arabah, the slopes, the wilderness, and the Negev – the land of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites:

9 the king of Jericho (one),
the king of Ai – located near Bethel – (one), **10** the king of Jerusalem (one),
the king of Hebron (one),
11 the king of Jarmuth (one),
the king of Lachish (one),
12 the king of Eglon (one),
the king of Gezer (one),
13 the king of Debir (one),
the king of Geder (one),
14 the king of Hormah (one),
the king of Arad (one),
15 the king of Libnah (one),
the king of Adullam (one),
16 the king of Makkedah (one),
the king of Bethel (one),
17 the king of Tappuah (one),
the king of Hephher (one),
18 the king of Aphek (one),
the king of Lasharon (one),
19 the king of Madon (one),
the king of Hazor (one),
20 the king of Shimron Meron (one), the king of Acshaph (one),
21 the king of Taanach (one),
the king of Megiddo (one),
22 the king of Kedesh (one),
the king of Jokneam near Carmel (one),

23 the king of Dor – near Naphath Dor – (one), the king of Goyim – near Gilgal – (one),

24 the king of Tirzah (one),
a total of thirty-one kings.

1 When Joshua was very old, the LORD told him, “You are very old, and a great deal of land remains to be conquered.

Guzik - Joshua 13:1-33

Joshua 13 - The Remaining Land; Allotments

East of the Jordan

A. God's command to Joshua regarding the land remaining to be conquered.

1. (1) God speaks to an old Joshua about the land remaining to be possessed.

Now Joshua was old, advanced in years. And the LORD said to him: "You are old, advanced in years, and there remains very much land yet to be possessed."

a. **You are old:** Even while acknowledging Joshua's advanced years, God still tells him about a job that needs to be done. No matter how much we have done in our Christian lives, there still remains much to do.

b. **There remains very much land yet to be possessed:** While there is still much to do, there can be no satisfaction with a partial inheritance - God wants us to keep pressing on.

c. What the land was to Israel, Jesus is to us.

We are to possess all of Him, and to keep pressing on to have all of Jesus.

i. How much of Jesus do you have? How much of the Bible do you possess as yours?

Do you walk in the blessing of leading others to Jesus Christ? Of answered prayer? Of meeting the needs of others in God's family?

2. (2-6a) The land that remains to be occupied is described.

This is the land that yet remains: all the territory of the Philistines and all *that of* the Geshurites, from Sihor, which *is* east of Egypt, as far as the border of Ekron northward (*which* is counted as Canaanite); the five lords of the Philistines; the Gazites, the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the Avites; from the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians as far as Aphek, to the border of the Amorites; the land of the

Gebalites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrise, from Baal Gad below Mount Hermon as far as the entrance to Hamath; all the inhabitants of the mountains from Lebanon as far as the Brook Misrephoth, *and* all the Sidonians; 3. (6b-7) God's method for possessing the land is described.

Then I will drive out from before the children of Israel; only divide it by lot to Israel as an inheritance, as I have commanded you. Now therefore, divide this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh.

a. God promises **I will drive [them] out from before the children of Israel**, but He intends that each tribe trust God for this in the portion of land divided to them by lot.

b. Each tribe was responsible to possess their own land completely. God is high on the concept of personal responsibility and initiative.

i. Not only because that is how things get done, but also because that is how people are blessed in service. We are blessed by personally taking responsibility and initiative in trusting God to do what He has called them to do.

B. Land allotments east of the Jordan.

1. (8-13) The land to be divided on the east side of the Jordan river.

With the other half tribe the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance, which Moses had given them, beyond the Jordan eastward, as Moses the servant of the LORD had given them: from Aroer which *is* on the bank of the River Arnon, and the town that *is* in the midst of the ravine, and all the plain of Medeba as far as Dibon; all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, as far as the border of the children of Ammon; Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan as far as Salcah; all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and Edrei, who remained of the

remnant of the giants; for Moses had defeated and cast out these. Nevertheless the children of Israel did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maachathites, but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day.

a. This passage describes the portion of land divided among Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh. It was the land of king Sihon of the Amorites and king Og of Bashan.

b. **Nevertheless the children of Israel did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maachathites:** Only two small tribes of peoples were not replaced by the Jewish tribes settling on the east side of the Jordan: the **Geshurites** and the **Maachathites**.

i. David later married a princess from Geshur, and his son Absalom was born of her (2Sa. 3:3). Absalom returned to Geshur and used it as a place to plot against his father David (2Sa. 13:37-38, 14:23, and 14:32).

ii. The Maachathites may have come from the Maachah mentioned in Gen. 22:24, who was a nephew of Abraham. Later, when Sheba rebelled against David, he fled and may have taken refuge in one of the cities of the Maachathites (2Sa. 20:14-15).

2. (14) The unique situation of the tribe of Levi.

Only to the tribe of Levi he had given no inheritance; the sacrifices of the LORD God of Israel made by fire *are* their inheritance, as He said to them.

a. **Only to the tribe of Levi he had given no inheritance:** Levi, the priestly tribe, was to receive no "province" such as the other tribes received; they would be given certain cities (Joshua 20-21).

b. **The sacrifices of the LORD God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance:** Instead, the Levites had as their inheritance the offerings that Israel would bring to the LORD. These were their "financial security" in Israel.

3. (15-23) The portion of Reuben's land.

And Moses had given to the tribe of the children of Reuben *an inheritance* according to their families. Their territory was from Aroer, which *is* on the bank of the River Arnon, and the city that *is* in the midst of the ravine, and all the plain by Medeba; Heshbon and all its cities that *are* in the plain: Dibon, Bamoth Baal, Beth Baal Meon, Jahaza, Kedemoth, Mephaath, Kirjathaim, Sibmah, Zereth Shagar on the mountain of the valley, Beth Peor, the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth Jeshimoth; all the cities of the plain and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses had struck with the princes of Midian: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, who *were* princes of Sihon dwelling in the country. The children of Israel also killed with the sword Balaam the son of Beor, the soothsayer, among those who were killed by them. And the border of the children of Reuben was the bank of the Jordan. This *was* the inheritance of the children of Reuben according to their families, the cities and their villages.

4. (24-28) The portion of Gad's land.

Moses also had given *an inheritance* to the tribe of Gad, to the children of Gad according to their families. Their territory was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the Ammonites as far as Aroer, which *is* before Rabbah, and from Heshbon to Ramath Mizpah and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the border of Debir, and in the valley Beth Haram, Beth Nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, with the Jordan as *its* border, as far as the edge of the Sea of Chinnereth, on the other side of the Jordan eastward. This *is* the inheritance of the children of Gad according to their families, the cities and their villages.

5. (29-32) The portion of half the tribe of Manasseh's land.

Moses also had given *an inheritance* to half the tribe of Manasseh; it was for half the tribe of the children of Manasseh according to their families: Their territory was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair which are in Bashan, sixty cities; half of Gilead, and Ashtaroth and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, *were* for the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, for half of the children of Machir according to their families. These *are the areas* which Moses had distributed as an inheritance in the plains of Moab on the other side of the Jordan, by Jericho eastward.

6. (33) More on the inheritance of the Levites.

But to the tribe of Levi Moses had given no inheritance; the LORD God of Israel *was* their inheritance, as He had said to them.

a. **The LORD God of Israel was their inheritance, as He had said to them:** In Jos.

13:14, we are told that the Levites had no land for an inheritance, but instead had the sacrifices Israel brought to God. They also received a greater inheritance than that: God Himself.

b. In this sense, if there is any tribe that Christians are spiritually connected to, it is the tribe of Levi. We also are called priests (1Pe.

2:5) and have a special inheritance in God (Eph.

1:11, Col. 1:12, and 1Pe. 1:4).

c. Many of us are dissatisfied with our place before God. We wish He would have given us something different, and we can even get bitter towards God about this. The primary answer to this is to see ourselves as priests, and to understand that our real inheritance is God Himself.

© 2001 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** This is the land that remains: all the territory of the Philistines and all the Geshurites, **3** from the Shihor River east of Egypt northward to the territory of

Ekron (it is regarded as Canaanite territory), including the area belonging to the five Philistine lords who ruled in Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron, as well as Avvite land **4** to the south; all the Canaanite territory, from Arah in the region of Sidon to Aphek, as far as Amorite territory; **5** the territory of Byblos and all Lebanon to the east, from Baal Gad below Mount Hermon to Lebo Hamath. **6** I will drive out before the Israelites all who live in the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth Maim, all the Sidonians; you be sure to parcel it out to Israel as I instructed you.” **7**

Now, divide up this land among the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh.”

8 The other half of Manasseh, Reuben, and Gad received their allotted tribal lands beyond the Jordan, just as Moses, the LORD’s servant, had assigned them. **9** Their territory started from Aroer (on the edge of the Arnon Valley), included the city in the middle of the valley, the whole plain of Medeba as far as Dibon, **10** and all the cities of King Sihon of the Amorites who ruled in Heshbon, and ended at the Ammonite border. **11** Their territory also included Gilead, Geshurite and Maacathite territory, all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan to Salecah – **12** the whole kingdom of Og in Bashan, who ruled in Ashtaroth and Edrei. (He was one of the few remaining Rephaites.) Moses defeated them and took their lands. **13** But the Israelites did not conquer the Geshurites and Maacathites; Geshur and Maacah live among Israel to this very day. **14**

However, Moses did not assign land as an inheritance to the Levites; their inheritance is the sacrificial offerings made to the LORD God of Israel, as he instructed them.

15 Moses assigned land to the tribe of Reuben by its clans. **16** Their territory started at Aroer (on the edge of the Arnon Valley) and included the city in the middle of the valley, the whole plain of Medeba, **17** Heshbon and all its surrounding cities on the plain, including Dibon, Bamoth Baal, Beth Baal Meon, **18** Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath, **19**

Kiriathaim, Sibmah, Zereth Shahar on the hill in the valley,
20 Beth Peor, the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth Jeshimoth.

21 It encompassed all the cities of the plain and the whole realm of King Sihon of the Amorites who ruled in Heshbon.

Moses defeated him and the Midianite leaders Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba (they were subjects of Sihon and lived in his territory).

22 The Israelites killed Balaam son of Beor, the omen reader, along with the others. **23** The border of the tribe of Reuben was the Jordan. The land allotted to the tribe of Reuben by its clans included these cities and their towns.

24 Moses assigned land to the tribe of Gad by its clans.

25 Their territory included Jazer, all the cities of Gilead, and half of Ammonite territory as far as Aroer near Rabbah. **26**

Their territory ran from Heshbon to Ramath Mizpah and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the territory of Debir. **27** It included the valley of Beth Haram, Beth Nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, and the rest of the realm of King Sihon of Heshbon, the area east of the Jordan to the end of the Sea of Kinnereth. **28** The land allotted to the tribe of Gad by its clans included these cities and their towns.

29 Moses assigned land to the half-tribe of Manasseh by its clans. **30** Their territory started at Mahanaim and encompassed all Bashan, the whole realm of King Og of Bashan, including all sixty cities in Havvoth Jair in Bashan.

31 Half of Gilead, Ashtaroth, and Edrei, cities in the kingdom of Og in Bashan, were assigned to the descendants of Makir son of Manasseh, to half the descendants of Makir by their clans.

32 These are the land assignments made by Moses on the plains of Moab east of the Jordan River opposite Jericho. **33** However, Moses did not assign land as an inheritance to the Levites; their inheritance is the LORD God of Israel, as he instructed them.

1 The following is a record of the territory assigned to the Israelites in the land of Canaan by Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the Israelite tribal leaders.

Guzik - Joshua 14:1-15

Joshua 14 - The Western Land to be Divided

A. Preparation for the division of the land.

1. (1-2) The distribution of the land on the western side of the Jordan river.

These *are the areas* which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel distributed as an inheritance to them. Their inheritance *was* by lot, as the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes and the half-tribe.

a. **Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel distributed as an inheritance to them:** In this process, Joshua, Eleazar and representatives from each tribe came together to supervise the casting of lots, which was directed by the LORD.

2. (3-5) An explanation of the nine and one-half tribes who received their inheritance on the west side of the Jordan.

For Moses had given the inheritance of the two tribes and the half-tribe on the other side of the Jordan; but to the Levites he had given no inheritance among them. For the children of

Joseph were two tribes: Manasseh and Ephraim.

And they gave no part to the Levites in the land, except cities to dwell *in*, with their common-lands for their livestock and their property. As the LORD had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did; and they divided the land.

a. **For the children of Joseph were two tribes:** We commonly think and speak of the "twelve tribes of Israel" but actually there were thirteen, because although there were twelve sons of Jacob (Israel), the descendents of one of his sons, Joseph, divided into **two tribes (Manasseh and Ephraim)**.

b. This explains why you can have two and one-half tribes on the east side of the Jordan river, nine and one-half tribes on

the west side of the Jordan river, and one tribe with no province as their inheritance.

B. Caleb's inheritance.

1. (6-9) Caleb remembers Moses' promise.

Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him: "You know the word which the LORD said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me in Kadesh Barnea. I *was* forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back word to him as *it was* in my heart. Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the LORD my God. So Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children's forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.'"

a. **Caleb the son of Jephunneh:** Caleb, from the tribe of Judah, was one of the twelve spies who scouted out the land of Canaan some forty-five years before when Israel first was on the threshold of the Promised Land (Num. 13:1-25).

b. **But I wholly followed the LORD my God:** Caleb was one of the only two spies to come back with a good report, a report of faith,

believing that God had given Israel the land and would enable them to conquer it (Num. 13:26-14:9). The other ten spies believed that Israel would be destroyed in the attempt to take Canaan, and Israel believed the ten doubting spies.

i. The other faithful spy was none other than Joshua. The ten faithless spies measured the giants against their own strength, but

Joshua and Caleb measured the spies against God's strength.

c. This was the cause of Israel's forty years of wandering in the wilderness; God would not allow that generation of unbelief to enter in, so He waited for them to die in the desert (Num.

14:26-38). The only ones of age at the time of the rejection who actually entered the Promised Land were be Joshua and Caleb, the two faithful spies.

d. So, it is fitting as Judah is the first tribe to receive its allotment on the west side of the Jordan, that Caleb be the first among the people of Judah to receive his inheritance.

e. **So Moses swore on that day, saying,**

'Surely the land where your foot has

trodden shall be your inheritance and your children's forever: Caleb calls Joshua back to the promise Moses made in Deu. 1:35-36.

When Caleb says **I wholly followed the**

LORD my God, he isn't being proud - he is just quoting what Moses had said about him.

i. We should imitate Caleb's boldness in

asking for what God promised him. We may

find it hard to believe, but God appreciates this kind of boldness.

f. **Because you have wholly followed the**

LORD my God: Because Caleb repeats this phrase twice, we can assume it made a significant impression on him - and fittingly so, because it is a great and important thing to **wholly** follow the LORD.

i. We recognize that most successful people

are those who have wholly given themselves

over to something. Will we **wholly** give ourselves over to following the LORD?

2. (10-15) Caleb seizes God's promise.

"And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, as He said, these forty-five years, ever since the LORD spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old. As yet I *am as* strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength *was* then, so now *is* my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in. Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you

heard in that day how the Anakim *were* there, and *that* the cities *were* great *and* fortified. It may be that the LORD *will be* with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD

said." And Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance.

Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel. And the name of Hebron formerly was Kirjath Arba (*Arba* was the greatest man among the Anakim). Then the land had rest from war.

a. Here I am this day, eighty-five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me: Though he is advanced in age, his strength is undiminished.

At eighty-five he was out leading the fight, and not against just any foe, but against the **Anakim**.

i. This is how God wants us to be in our spiritual life as we advance in years: growing older, but never weaker in Jesus.

b. Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim

were there: In fact, Caleb *wants* the fight. He could have asked for an easy place, but he knows that these foes must be faced and

figures that he may as well be the one to do it.

He doesn't leave the work to someone else, though he could have, especially at his age.

c. Because he wholly followed the LORD

God of Israel: What if *all* of Israel had the heart of Caleb? What if *no one* in Israel had the heart of Caleb? Again, Caleb's secret is clear: **he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel**. There was a total commitment in Caleb's life.

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2 The land assignments to the nine-and-a-half tribes were made by drawing lots, as the LORD had instructed Moses. **3** Now Moses had assigned land to the two-and-a-half tribes east of the Jordan, but he assigned no land to the Levites. **4** The descendants of Joseph were considered as two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim. The Levites were allotted no territory, though they were assigned cities in which to live, along with the grazing areas for their cattle and possessions. **5** The Israelites followed the LORD's instructions to Moses and divided up the land.

6 The men of Judah approached Joshua in Gilgal, and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the LORD said about you and me to Moses, the man of God, at Kadesh Barnea. **7** I was forty years old when Moses, the LORD's servant, sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy on the land and I brought back to him an honest report. **8** My countrymen who accompanied me frightened the people, but I remained loyal to the LORD

my God. **9** That day Moses made this solemn promise:

'Surely the land on which you walked will belong to you and your descendants permanently, for you remained loyal to the LORD your God.' **10** So now, look, the LORD has preserved my life, just as he promised, these past forty-five years since the LORD spoke these words to Moses, during which Israel traveled through the wilderness. Now look, I am today eighty-five years old. **11** Today I am still as strong as when Moses sent me out. I can fight and go about my daily activities with the same energy I had then.

12 Now, assign me this hill country which the LORD promised me at that time! No doubt you heard at that time that the Anakites live there in large, fortified cities. But, assuming the LORD is with me, I will conquer them, as the LORD promised." **13** Joshua asked God to empower Caleb son of Jephunneh and assigned him Hebron. **14** So Hebron remains the assigned land of Caleb son of Jephunneh the

Kenizzite to this very day because he remained loyal to the LORD God of Israel. **15** (Hebron used to be called Kiriath Arba. Arba was a famous Anakite.) Then the land was free of war.

1 The land allotted to the tribe of Judah by its clans reached to the border of Edom, to the Wilderness of Zin in the Negev far to the south.

Guzik - Joshua 15:1-63

Joshua 15, 16, 17 - The Inheritance of Judah,

Ephraim and Western Manasseh

A. The inheritance of Judah.

1. (15:1-12) The borders of the province of Judah.

So *this* was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families: The border of Edom at the Wilderness of Zin southward *was* the extreme southern boundary. And their southern border began at the shore of the Salt Sea, from the bay that faces southward. Then it went out to the southern side of the Ascent of Akrabbim, passed along to Zin, ascended on the south side of Kadesh Barnea, passed along to Hezron, went up to Adar, and went around to Karkaa. *From there* it passed toward Azmon and went out to the Brook of Egypt; and the border ended at the sea. This shall be your southern border. The east border *was* the Salt Sea as far as the mouth of the Jordan. And the border on the northern

quarter *began* at the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan. The border went up to Beth

Hoglah and passed north of Beth Arabah; and the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. Then the border went up toward Debir from the Valley of Achor, and it turned northward toward Gilgal, which *is* before the Ascent of Adummim, which *is* on the south side of the valley. The border continued toward the waters of En Shemesh and ended at En Rogel. And the border went up by the Valley of the Son of

Hinnom to the southern slope of the Jebusite *city* (which *is* Jerusalem). The border went up to the top of the mountain that *lies* before the Valley of Hinnom westward, which *is* at the end of the Valley of Rephaim northward. Then the border went around from the top of the hill to the

fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and extended to the cities of Mount Ephron. And the border went around to

Baalah (which *is* Kirjath Jearim).

Then the border turned westward from Baalah to Mount Seir, passed along to the side of Mount Jearim on the north (which *is* Chesalon), went down to Beth Shemesh, and passed on to Timnah. And the border went out to the side of Ekron northward. Then the border went around to Shicron, passed along to Mount Baalah, and extended to Jabneel; and the border ended at the sea. The west border *was* the coastline of the Great Sea. This *is* the boundary of the children of Judah all around according to their families.

a. All this may seem tedious to us, but it certainly was not tedious to those who would possess this land.

2. (13-19) The land allotted the Caleb and his family.

Now to Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a share among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, *namely*, Kirjath Arba, which *is* Hebron (*Arba was* the father of Anak). Caleb drove out the three sons of Anak from there: Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak. Then he went up from there to the inhabitants of Debir (formerly the name of Debir *was* Kirjath Sepher). And Caleb said, "He who attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give Achsah my daughter as wife."

So Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it; and he gave him Achsah his daughter as wife. Now it was so, when she came *to him*, that she persuaded him to ask her father for a field. So she dismounted from *her* donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you wish?" She answered, "Give me a blessing; since you have given me land in the South, give me also springs of water." So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

a. **He who attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give Achsah my**

daughter as wife: Caleb was not only a man of great and bold deeds (the driving out of **the children of Anak**), but also a man who encouraged others to great and bold deeds. He did this by offering his daughter in marriage to the man who was bold enough to conquer a city to have her.

b. Give me a blessing; since you have given me land in the South, give me also

springs of water: As well, Caleb's daughter imitates her father's boldness in asking for blessing. She did not hesitate to ask her father for some choice springs.

3. (20-62) The cities, villages, and regions occupied by the tribe of Judah.

This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families: The cities at the limits of the tribe of the children of Judah, toward the border of Edom in the South, were Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, Hazor, Hadattah, Kerioth, Hezron (which *is* Hazor), Amam, Shema, Moladah, Hazar Gaddah, Heshmon, Beth Pelet, Hazar Shual, Beersheba, Bizjothjah, Baalah, Ijim, Ezem, Eltolad, Chesil, Hormah, Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon: all the cities *are* twenty-nine, with their villages.

In the lowland: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, Zanoah, En Gannim, Tappuah, Enam, Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, Sharaim, Adithaim, Gederah, and Gederothaim: fourteen cities with their villages; Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad, Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel, Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, Cabbon, Lahmas, Kithlish, Gederoth, Beth Dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah: sixteen cities with their villages; Libnah, Ether, Ashan, Jiphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah: nine cities with their villages; Ekron, with its towns and villages; from Ekron to the sea, all that *lay* near Ashdod, with their villages; Ashdod with its towns and

villages, Gaza with its towns and villages; as far as the Brook of Egypt and the Great Sea with *its* coastline. And in the mountain country: Shamir, Jattir, Sochoh, Dannah, Kirjath Sannah (which *is* Debir), Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, Goshen, Holon, and Giloh: eleven cities with their villages; Arab, Dumah, Eshean, Janum, Beth Tappuah, Aphekah, Humtah, Kirjath Arba (which *is* Hebron), and Zior: nine cities with their villages; Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah: ten cities with their villages; Halhul, Beth Zur, Gedor, Maarath, Beth Anoth, and Eltekon: six cities with their villages; Kirjath Baal (which *is* Kirjath Jearim) and Rabbah: two cities with their villages.

In the wilderness: Beth Arabah, Middin, Secacah, Nibshan, the City of Salt, and En Gedi: six cities with their villages.

4. (63) An incomplete occupation: Jerusalem remains in Canaanite hands.

As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem to this day.

a. The inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them

out: We can understand why Jerusalem was a city hard to conquer. The fact that it was set on a hill made it easy to defend.

b. Yet, no matter how hard the struggle, with God's promise, and God's help, we can triumph

- there is really no good excuse for why this city must stay in Canaanite hands until the time of David (2Sa. 5:6-10).

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2 Their southern border started at the southern tip of the Salt Sea, **3** extended south of the Scorpion Ascent, crossed to Zin, went up from the south to Kadesh Barnea, crossed to Hezron, went up to Addar, and turned toward Karka. **4** It then crossed to Azmon, extended to the Stream of Egypt,

and ended at the sea. This was their southern border. **5** The eastern border was the Salt Sea to the mouth of the Jordan River.

The northern border started north of the Salt Sea at the mouth of the Jordan, **6** went up to Beth Hoglah, crossed north of Beth Arabah, and went up to the Stone of Bohan son of Reuben. **7** It then went up to Debir from the Valley of Achor, turning northward to Gilgal (which is opposite the Pass of Adummim south of the valley), crossed to the waters of En Shemesh and extended to En Rogel. **8** It then went up the Valley of Ben Hinnom to the slope of the Jebusites on the south (that is, Jerusalem), going up to the top of the hill opposite the Valley of Ben Hinnom to the west, which is at the end of the Valley of the Rephaites to the north. **9** It then went from the top of the hill to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah, extended to the cities of Mount Ephron, and went to Baalah (that is, Kiriath Jearim). **10** It then turned from Baalah westward to Mount Seir, crossed to the slope of Mount Jearim on the north (that is Kesalon), descended to Beth Shemesh, and crossed to Timnah. **11** It then extended to the slope of Ekron to the north, went toward Shikkeron, crossed to Mount Baalah, extended to Jabneel, and ended at the sea.

12 The western border was the Mediterranean Sea.

These were the borders of the tribe of Judah and its clans.

13 Caleb son of Jephunneh was assigned Kiriath Arba (that is Hebron) within the tribe of Judah, according to the LORD's instructions to Joshua. (Arba was the father of Anak.) **14**

Caleb drove out from there three Anakites –

Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi, descendants of Anak. **15**

From there he attacked the people of Debir. (Debir used to be called Kiriath Sepher.) **16** Caleb said, "To the man who attacks and captures Kiriath Sepher I will give my daughter Acsah as a wife." **17** When Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's brother, captured it, Caleb gave Acsah his daughter to him as a wife.

18 One time Acsah came and charmed her father so that she could ask him for some land. When she got down from her donkey, Caleb said to her, "What would you like?" **19**

She answered, "Please give me a special present. Since you have given me land in the Negev, now give me springs of water. So he gave her both upper and lower springs.

20 This is the land assigned to the tribe of Judah by its clans: **21** These cities were located at the southern extremity of Judah's tribal land near the border of Edom:

Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, **22** Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, **23**

Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, **24** Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, **25** Hazor Hadattah, Kerioth Hezron (that is, Hazor), **26** Amam, Shema,

Moladah, **27** Hazar Gaddah, Heshbon, Beth Pelet, **28** Hazar Shual, Beer Sheba, Biziothiah, **29** Baalah, Iim, Ezem, **30**

Eltolad, Kesil, Hormah, **31** Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, **32** Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon – a total of twenty-nine cities and their towns.

33 These cities were in the lowlands: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, **34** Zanoah, En Gannim, Tappuah, Enam, **35**

Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, **36** Shaaraim, Adithaim, and Gederah (or Gederothaim) – a total of fourteen cities and their towns.

37 Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad, **38** Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel, **39** Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, **40** Cabbon, Lahmas, Kitlish, **41** Gederoth, Beth Dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah – a total of sixteen cities and their towns.

42 Libnah, Ether, Ashan, **43** Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, **44**

Keilah, Aczib, and Mareshah – a total of nine cities and their towns.

45 Ekron and its surrounding towns and settlements; **46**

from Ekron westward, all those in the vicinity of Ashdod and their towns; **47** Ashdod with its surrounding towns and settlements, and Gaza with its surrounding towns and settlements, as far as the Stream of Egypt and the border at the Mediterranean Sea.

48 These cities were in the hill country: Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, **49** Dannah, Kiriath Sannah (that is, Debir), **50** Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, **51** Goshen, Holon, and Giloh – a total of eleven cities and their towns.

52 Arab, Dumah, Eshan, **53** Janim, Beth Tappuah, Aphekah, **54** Humtah, Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron), and Zior – a total of nine cities and their towns.

55 Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, **56** Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, **57** Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah – a total of ten cities and their towns.

58 Halhul, Beth Zur, Gedor, **59** Maarath, Beth Anoth, and Eltekon – a total of six cities and their towns.

60 Kiriath Baal (that is, Kiriath Jearim) and Rabbah – a total of two cities and their towns.

61 These cities were in the desert: Beth Arabah, Middin, Secacah, **62** Nibshan, the city of Salt, and En Gedi – a total of six cities and their towns.

63 The men of Judah were unable to conquer the Jebusites living in Jerusalem. The Jebusites live with the people of Judah in Jerusalem to this very day.

1 The land allotted to Joseph's descendants extended from the Jordan at Jericho to the waters of Jericho to the east, through the desert and on up from Jericho into the hill country of Bethel.

Guzik - Joshua 16:1-10

Joshua 15, 16, 17 - The Inheritance of Judah,

Ephraim and Western Manasseh

B. The inheritance of the sons of Joseph.

1. (16:1-4) The borders of the province belonging to the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and the half-tribe of Manasseh settling on the west side of the Jordan.

The lot fell to the children of Joseph from the Jordan, by Jericho, to the waters of Jericho on the east, to the wilderness that goes up from Jericho through the mountains to Bethel, then went out from Bethel to Luz, passed along to the border of the Archites at Ataroth, and went down westward to the boundary of the Japhletites, as far as the boundary of Lower Beth Horon to Gezer; and it ended at the sea. So the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their inheritance.

2. (5-10) The borders of the province of Ephraim.

The border of the children of Ephraim, according to their families, was *thus*: The border of their inheritance on the east side was Ataroth Addar as far as Upper Beth Horon. And the border went out toward the sea on the north side of Michmethath; then the border went around eastward to Taanath Shiloh, and passed by it on the east of Janohah. Then it went down from Janohah to Ataroth and Naarah, reached to

Jericho, and came out at the Jordan. The border went out from Tappuah westward to the Brook Kanah, and it ended at the sea. This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim according to their families. The separate cities for the children of Ephraim *were* among the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages. And they did not drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites to this day and have become forced laborers.

a. **And they did not drive out the**

Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer: Their

failure to completely drive out the Canaanites is typical of all the tribes. Even within the Promised Land there remains important work to do and battles to fight.

b. The Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites to this day and have become forced laborers:

Perhaps the people of Ephraim were guilty of this compromise because they wanted **forced laborers** among them.

Even this convenience does not justify their disobedience to God's command.

i. If they had the power to make the people of Gezer forced laborers, they certainly had the power to defeat them completely, especially because Gezer was a city that

Joshua had already conquered (Jos. 10:33 and Jos. 12:12).

ii. This sort of compromise seems innocent, but it became the way that much idolatry and immoral worship came into the people of Israel. This is one reason why we see so many struggles in the days of the Judges.

c. The Israelites did not fully conquer for two reasons. First, they wanted peace at any cost.

Second, they wanted wealth. For the sake of *ease* and *money*, they disobeyed God and fell short of what He had for them - as we do today also.

© 2001 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** The southern border extended from Bethel to Luz, and crossed to Arkite territory at Ataroth. **3** It then descended westward to Japhletite territory, as far as the territory of lower Beth Horon and Gezer, and ended at the sea.

4 Joseph's descendants, Manasseh and Ephraim, were assigned their land. **5** The territory of the tribe of Ephraim by its clans included the following: The border of their

assigned land to the east was Ataroth Addar as far as upper Beth Horon. **6** It then extended on to the sea, with Micmethath on the north. It turned eastward to Taanath Shiloh and crossed it on the east to Janoah. **7** It then descended from Janoah to Ataroth and Naarah, touched Jericho, and extended to the Jordan River. **8** From Tappuah it went westward to the Valley of Kanah and ended at the sea. This is the land assigned to the tribe of Ephraim by its clans. **9** Also included were the cities set apart for the tribe of Ephraim within Manasseh's territory, along with their towns. **10** The Ephraimites did not conquer the Canaanites living in Gezer. The Canaanites live among the Ephraimites to this very day and do hard labor as their servants. **1** The tribe of Manasseh, Joseph's firstborn son, was also allotted land. The descendants of Makir, Manasseh's firstborn and the father of Gilead, received land, for they were warriors. They were assigned Gilead and Bashan.

Guzik - Joshua 17:1-18

Joshua 15, 16, 17 - The Inheritance of Judah,

Ephraim and Western Manasseh

3. (17:1-2) Distribution of the land among the remaining families of the tribe of Manasseh.

There was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh, for he *was* the firstborn of Joseph: *namely* for Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, because he was a man of war; therefore he was given Gilead and Bashan. And there was *a lot* for the rest of the children of Manasseh according to their families: for the children of Abiezer, the children of Helek, the children of Asriel, the children of Shechem, the children of Hephher, and the children of Shemida; these *were* the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph according to their families.

4. (3-6) The inheritance of Zelophehad's daughters.

But Zelophehad the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but only daughters. And these *are* the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah,

Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. And they came near before Eleazar the priest, before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the rulers, saying, "The LORD

commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brothers." Therefore, according to the commandment of the LORD, he gave them an inheritance among their father's brothers. Ten shares fell to Manasseh, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which *were* on the other side of the Jordan, because the daughters of

Manasseh received an inheritance among his sons; and the rest of Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead.

a. **Zelophehad . . . had no sons, but only daughters:**

This is noted in the text because it was unusual for women to receive an

inheritance. It was more important that the land remain in the ancestral families than it was to follow this custom. Therefore the daughters of Zelophehad could inherit their father's land.

b. This is actually merely the implementation of a decision arrived at by Moses in Num. 27:1-11.

5. (7-13) The boundaries of the western half-tribe of Manasseh and their incomplete occupation of that land.

And the territory of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethath, that *lies* east of Shechem; and the border went along south to the inhabitants of En Tappuah. Manasseh had the land of Tappuah,

but Tappuah on the border of Manasseh

belonged to the children of Ephraim. And the border descended to the Brook Kanah, southward to the brook. These cities of Ephraim *are* among the cities of Manasseh. The border of Manasseh *was* on the north side of the brook; and it ended at the sea. Southward *it was* Ephraim's, northward *it was* Manasseh's, and the sea was its border. Manasseh's territory was adjoining Asher on the north and Issachar on the east. And in Issachar and in Asher, Manasseh had Beth Shean and its towns, Ibleam and its towns, the inhabitants of Dor and its towns, the inhabitants of En Dor and its towns, the inhabitants of

Taanach and its towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its towns; three hilly regions. Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out *the inhabitants of* those cities, but the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land. And it happened, when the children of Israel grew strong, that they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not utterly drive them out.

a. **Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities:** Their failure here is after the same pattern as the failure of the tribe of Ephraim in Jos. 16:10.

b. Of course the Canaanites would be

determined to dwell in that land. What was lacking was complete determination from the people of Israel. They were satisfied to **put the Canaanites to forced labor.**

6. (14-18) Joshua answers the complaint of the sons of Joseph.

Then the children of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, "Why have you given us *only* one lot and one share to inherit, since we *are* a great people, inasmuch as the LORD has blessed us until now?"

So Joshua answered them, "If you *are* a great people, *then* go up to the forest *country* and clear a place for yourself there in the land of the Perizzites and the giants, since the mountains of Ephraim are too confined for you." But the children of Joseph said, "The mountain country is not enough for us; and all the Canaanites who dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of iron, *both those* who *are* of Beth Shean and its towns and *those* who *are* of the Valley of Jezreel." And Joshua spoke to the house of Joseph; to Ephraim and Manasseh; saying, "You *are* a great people and have great power; you shall not have *only* one lot, but the mountain country shall be yours. Although it *is* wooded, you shall cut it down, and its farthest extent shall be yours; for you shall drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots *and* are strong."

a. **Why have you given us only one lot and one share to inherit, since we are a great people:** Manasseh and Ephraim were

somewhat large tribes. Their combined number was greater than any other single tribe. Here, they complain that they have not been allotted adequate land.

b. **If you are a great people:** Joshua's reply is both wise and wonderful. He tells them, " **if you are a great people**, then go and get the land for yourself; fully occupy what the LORD

has given you." These tribes had not

completely taken the mountain country in their midst, because it would be hard and dangerous work.

i. How different is their attitude than Caleb's attitude (Jos. 14:11-12)! They want "easy land" given to them, instead of taking God's promises and going out and taking what God has given them. The principle applies just as strongly for us today; if we desire more of something, the first thing to do is to be a faithful as we can where we are.

ii. Perhaps they appealed to Joshua as a fellow Ephraimite, because he was a descendent of Joseph himself.

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2 The rest of Manasseh's descendants were also assigned land by their clans, including the descendants of Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hephher, and Shemida.

These are the male descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph by their clans.

3 Now Zelophehad son of Hephher, son of Gilead, son of Makir, son of Manasseh, had no sons, only daughters.

These are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. **4** They went before Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders and said, "The LORD told Moses to assign us land among our relatives."

So Joshua assigned them land among their uncles, as the LORD had commanded. **5** Manasseh was allotted ten shares of land, in addition to the land of Gilead and Bashan east of the Jordan, **6** for the daughters of Manasseh were assigned land among his sons. The land of Gilead belonged to the rest of the descendants of Manasseh.

7 The border of Manasseh went from Asher to Micmethath which is near Shechem. It then went south toward those who live in Tappuah. **8** (The land of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but Tappuah, located on the border of Manasseh, belonged to the tribe of Ephraim.) **9**

The border then descended southward to the Valley of Kanah. Ephraim was assigned cities there among the cities of Manasseh, but the border of Manasseh was north of the valley and ended at the sea. **10** Ephraim's territory was to the south, and Manasseh's to the north. The sea was Manasseh's western border and their territory touched Asher on the north and Issachar on the east. **11** Within Issachar's and Asher's territory Manasseh was assigned Beth Shean, Ibleam, the residents of Dor, En Dor, the residents of Taanach, the residents of Megiddo, the three of Napheth, and the towns surrounding all these cities. **12**

But the men of Manasseh were unable to conquer these cities; the Canaanites managed to remain in those areas.

13 Whenever the Israelites were strong militarily, they forced the Canaanites to do hard labor, but they never totally conquered them.

14 The descendants of Joseph said to Joshua, "Why have you assigned us only one tribal allotment? After all, we have many people, for until now the LORD has enabled us to increase in number." **15** Joshua replied to them,

"Since you have so many people, go up into the forest and clear out a place to live in the land of the Perizzites and Rephaites, for the hill country of Ephraim is too small for you." **16** The descendants of Joseph said, "The whole hill country is inadequate for us, and the Canaanites living down in the valley in Beth Shean and its surrounding towns and in the Valley of Jezreel have chariots with iron-rimmed wheels."

17 Joshua said to the family of Joseph –

to both Ephraim and Manasseh: "You have many people and great military strength. You will not have just one tribal allotment. **18** The whole hill country will be yours; though it is a forest, you can clear it and it will be entirely yours. You can conquer the Canaanites, though they have chariots with iron-rimmed wheels and are strong."

1 The entire Israelite community assembled at Shiloh and there they set up the tent of meeting. Though they had

subdued the land,
Guzik - Joshua 18:1-28

Joshua 18, 19 - Inheritance of the Remaining

Tribes

A. The survey of the land for the seven remaining tribes.

1. (18:1-3) At Shiloh, Joshua exhorts the remaining tribes to possess their land.

Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of meeting there. And the land was subdued before them. But there remained

among the children of Israel seven tribes which had not yet received their inheritance. Then Joshua said to the children of Israel: "How long will you neglect to go and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers has given you?"

a. **But there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes which had not yet**

received their inheritance: Why would they not want to possess their land? Why would

Joshua need to prod them? Probably because

these are people who had not lived in

permanent dwellings for more than a

generation, and they were afraid of something new, even if it was good.

b. **How long will you neglect to go and**

possess the land: Whatever the exact reason, the bottom line was **neglect**. They did not fulfill what God had called them to do.

2. (4-8) Joshua instructs a survey party to go out and assess the land that it may be divided among the seven remaining tribes.

"Pick out from among you three men for *each* tribe, and I will send them; they shall rise and go through the land, survey it according to their inheritance, and come *back* to me. And they shall divide it into seven parts. Judah shall remain in their territory on the south, and the house of Joseph shall

remain in their territory on the north. You shall therefore survey the land in seven parts and bring *the survey* here to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD our God. But the Levites have no part among you, for the priesthood of the LORD *is* their inheritance.

And Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance beyond the

Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them." Then the men arose to go away; and Joshua charged those who went to

survey the land, saying, "Go, walk through the land, survey it, and come back to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD in Shiloh."

3. (9-10) The successful survey party returns and Joshua casts lots to determine which tribes will receive which land.

So the men went, passed through the land, and wrote the survey in a book in seven parts by cities; and they came to Joshua at the camp in Shiloh. Then Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD, and there Joshua divided the land to the children of Israel according to their divisions.

B. The final division of the land.

1. (11-28) The boundaries and cities for the tribe of Benjamin.

Now the lot of the tribe of the children of

Benjamin came up according to their families, and the territory of their lot came out between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph.

Their border on the north side began at the

Jordan, and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north, and went up through the mountains westward; it ended at the Wilderness of Beth Aven. The border went over from there toward Luz, to the side of Luz (which *is* Bethel) southward; and the border descended to Ataroth Addar, near the hill that *lies* on the south side of Lower Beth Horon. Then the border extended

around the west side to the south, from the hill that *lies* before Beth Horon southward; and it ended at Kirjath Baal (which *is* Kirjath Jearim), a city of the children of Judah. This *was* the west side. The south side *began* at the end of Kirjath Jearim, and the border extended on the west and went out to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah.

Then the border came down to the end of the mountain that *lies* before the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, which *is* in the Valley of the Rephaim on the north, descended to the Valley of Hinnom, to the side of the Jebusite *city* on the south, and descended to En Rogel. And it went around from the north, went out to En Shemesh, and extended toward Geliloth, which is before the Ascent of Adummim, and descended to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. Then it passed

along toward the north side of Arabah, and went down to Arabah. And the border passed along to the north side of Beth Hoglah; then the border ended at the north bay at the Salt Sea, at the south end of the Jordan. This *was* the southern boundary. The Jordan was its border on the east side. This *was* the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, according to its boundaries all around, according to their families. Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, according to their families, were Jericho, Beth Hoglah, Emek Keziz, Beth Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, Avim, Parah, Ophrah, Chephar Haammoni, Ophni, and Gaba: twelve cities with their villages; Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, Mizpah, Chephirah, Mozah, Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, Zelah, Eleph, Jebus (which *is* Jerusalem), Gibeath, *and* Kirjath: fourteen cities with their villages. This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families.

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2 seven Israelite tribes had not been assigned their allotted land. **3** So Joshua said to the Israelites: "How long do you

intend to put off occupying the land the LORD God of your ancestors has given you? **4** Pick three men from each tribe. I will send them out to walk through the land and make a map of it for me. **5** Divide it into seven regions. Judah will stay in its territory in the south, and the family of Joseph in its territory in the north. **6** But as for you, map out the land into seven regions and bring it to me. I will draw lots for you here before the LORD our God.

7 But the Levites will not have an allotted portion among you, for their inheritance is to serve the LORD. Gad, Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh have already received their allotted land east of the Jordan which Moses the LORD's servant assigned them."

8 When the men started out, Joshua told those going to map out the land, "Go, walk through the land, map it out, and return to me. Then I will draw lots for you before the LORD here in Shiloh." **9** The men journeyed through the land and mapped it and its cities out into seven regions on a scroll. Then they came to Joshua at the camp in Shiloh.

10 Joshua drew lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD and divided the land among the Israelites according to their allotted portions.

11 The first lot belonged to the tribe of Benjamin by its clans. Their allotted territory was between Judah and Joseph.

12 Their northern border started at the Jordan, went up to the slope of Jericho on the north, ascended westward to the hill country, and extended to the desert of Beth Aven. **13** It then crossed from there to Luz, to the slope of Luz to the south (that is, Bethel), and descended to Ataroth Addar located on the hill that is south of lower Beth Horon. **14** It then turned on the west side southward from the hill near Beth Horon on the south and extended to Kiriath Baal (that is, Kiriath Jearim), a city belonging to the tribe of Judah. This is the western border. **15** The southern side started on the edge of Kiriath Jearim and extended westward to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah. **16** The border then descended to

the edge of the hill country near the Valley of Ben Hinnom located in the Valley of the Rephaites to the north. It descended through the Valley of Hinnom to the slope of the Jebusites to the south and then down to En Rogel. **17** It went northward, extending to En Shemesh and Geliloth opposite the Pass of Adummim, and descended to the Stone of Bohan son of Reuben. **18** It crossed to the slope in front of the Arabah to the north and descended into the Arabah.

19 It then crossed to the slope of Beth Hoglah to the north and ended at the northern tip of the Salt Sea at the mouth of the Jordan River. This was the southern border. **20** The Jordan River borders it on the east. These were the borders of the land assigned to the tribe of Benjamin by its clans.

21 These cities belonged to the tribe of Benjamin by its clans: Jericho, Beth Hoglah, Emek Keziz, **22** Beth Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, **23** Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, **24** Kephrah, Ammoni, Ophni, and Geba – a total of twelve cities and their towns.

25 Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, **26** Mizpah, Kephirah, Mozah, **27** Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, **28** Zelah, Haeleph, the Jebusite city (that is, Jerusalem), Gibeah, and Kiriath – a total of fourteen cities and their towns. This was the land assigned to the tribe of Benjamin by its clans.

1 The second lot belonged to the tribe of Simeon by its clans.

Guzik - Joshua 19:1-51

Joshua 18, 19 - Inheritance of the Remaining

Tribes

2. (19:1-9) The boundaries and cities for the tribe of Simeon. The second lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families. And their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah. They had in their inheritance Beersheba (Sheba), Moladah, Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem, Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, Ziklag, Beth Marcaboth, Hazar Susah, Beth Lebaoth, and Sharuhem: thirteen cities and their villages; Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan: four cities and their villages; and all the villages that *were* all around these cities as far as Baalath Beer, Ramah of the South. This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families. The inheritance of the children of Simeon *was included* in the share of the children of Judah, for the share of the

children of Judah was too much for them.

Therefore the children of Simeon had *their* inheritance within the inheritance of that people.

3. (10-16) The boundaries and cities for the tribe of Zebulun. The third lot came out for the children of Zebulun according to their families, and the border of their inheritance was as far as Sarid. Their border went toward the west and to Maralah, went to Dabbasheth, and extended along the brook that is east of Jokneam. Then from Sarid it went eastward toward the sunrise along the border of Chisloth Tabor, and went out toward Daberath, bypassing Japhia. And from there it passed along on the east of Gath Hopher, toward Eth Kazin, and extended to Rimmon, which borders on

Neah. Then the border went around it on the north side of Hannathon, and it ended in the Valley of Jiphthah El. Included were Kattath, Nahallal, Shimron,

Idalah, and Bethlehem: twelve cities with their villages. This *was* the inheritance of the children of Zebulun according to their families, these cities with their villages.

4. (17-23) The boundaries and cities for the tribe of Issachar. The fourth lot came out to Issachar, for the children of Issachar according to their families.

And their territory went to Jezreel, and *included* Chesulloth, Shunem, Haphraim, Shion,

Anaharath, Rabbith, Kishion, Abez, Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth Pazzez. And the

border reached to Tabor, Shahazimah, and Beth Shemesh; their border ended at the Jordan:

sixteen cities with their villages. This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar according to their families, the cities and their villages.

5. (24-31) The boundaries and cities for the tribe of Asher.

The fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families. And their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph, Alammelech, Amad, and Mishal; it reached to

Mount Carmel westward, along *the Brook* Shihor Libnath. It turned toward the sunrise to Beth Dagon; and it reached to Zebulun and to the

Valley of Jiphthah El, then northward beyond Beth Emek and Neiel, bypassing Cabul *which was* on the left, including Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, as far as Greater Sidon.

And the border turned to Ramah and to the

fortified city of Tyre; then the border turned to Hosah, and ended at the sea by the region of Achzib. Also Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob *were included*: twenty-two cities with their villages.

This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families, these cities with their villages.

6. (32-39) The boundaries and cities for the tribe of Naphtali.

The sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali, for the children of Naphtali according to their families. And their border began at Heleph, enclosing the territory from the terebinth tree in Zaanannim, Adami Nekeb, and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum; it ended at the Jordan. From Heleph the border extended westward to Aznoth Tabor, and went out from there toward Hukkok; it adjoined Zebulun on the south side and Asher on the west side, and ended at Judah by the Jordan toward the sunrise. And the fortified cities *are* Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth, Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, Kedesh, Edrei, En Hazor, Iron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath, and Beth Shemesh: nineteen cities with their villages. This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali according to their families, the cities and their villages.

7. (40-48) The boundaries and cities for the tribe of Dan.

The seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families. And the territory of their inheritance was Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh, Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Jethlah, Elon, Timnah, Ekron, Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon, Me Jarkon, and Rakkon, with the region near Joppa.

And the border of the children of Dan went beyond these, because the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem and took it; and they struck it with the edge of the sword, took possession of it, and dwelt in it. They called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father.

This *is* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.

8. (49-51) Joshua's inheritance.

When they had made an end of dividing the land as an inheritance according to their borders, the children of Israel gave an inheritance among them to Joshua the son of Nun. According to the word of the LORD they gave him the city

which he asked for, Timnath Serah in the mountains of Ephraim; and he built the city and dwelt in it.

These *were* the inheritances which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel divided as an inheritance by lot in Shiloh before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. So they made an end of dividing the country.

a. When they had made an end of dividing

the land: Joshua received what was promised to him by God, but in remarkable humility, he receives his portion last. This is the kind of humble service and concern for others that

makes Joshua such a wonderful picture of Jesus Christ.

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2 Their assigned land included Beer Sheba, Moladah, **3** Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem, **4** Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, **5** Ziklag, Beth Marcaboth, Hazar Susah, **6** Beth Lebaath, and Sharuhenn – a total of thirteen cities and their towns, **7** Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan – a total of four cities and their towns, **8** as well as all the towns around these cities as far as Baalath Beer (Ramah of the Negev). This was the land assigned to the tribe of Simeon by its clans. **9** Simeon's assigned land was taken from Judah's allotted portion, for Judah's territory was too large for them; so Simeon was assigned land within Judah.

10 The third lot belonged to the tribe of Zebulun by its clans. The border of their territory extended to Sarid. **11**

Their border went up westward to Maralah and touched Dabbesheth and the valley near Jokneam. **12** From Sarid it turned eastward to the territory of Kisloth Tabor, extended to Daberath, and went up to Japhia. **13** From there it crossed eastward to Gath Hopher and Eth Kazin and extended to Rimmon, turning toward Neah. **14** It then turned on the north to Hannathon and ended at the Valley of Iphtah El. **15** Their territory included Kattah, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah,

and Bethlehem; in all they had twelve cities and their towns. **16** This was the land assigned to the tribe of Zebulun by its clans, including these cities and their towns.

17 The fourth lot belonged to the tribe of Issachar by its clans. **18** Their assigned land included Jezreel, Kesulloth, Shunem, **19** Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, **20** Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, **21** Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah and Beth Pazzez. **22** Their border touched Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth Shemesh, and ended at the Jordan. They had sixteen cities and their towns. **23** This was the land assigned to the tribe of Issachar by its clans, including the cities and their towns.

24 The fifth lot belonged to the tribe of Asher by its clans.

25 Their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Acshaph, **26** Alammelech, Amad, and Mishal. Their border touched Carmel to the west and Shihor Libnath. **27** It turned eastward toward Beth Dagon, touched Zebulun and the Valley of Iphtah El to the north, as well as the Valley of Emek and Neiel, and extended to Cabul on the north **28**

and on to Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, as far as Greater Sidon. **29** It then turned toward Ramah as far as the fortified city of Tyre, turned to Hosah, and ended at the sea near Hebel, Aczib, **30** Umah, Aphek, and Rehob. In all they had twenty-two cities and their towns. **31** This was the land assigned to the tribe of Asher by its clans, including these cities and their towns.

32 The sixth lot belonged to the tribe of Naphtali by its clans. **33** Their border started at Heleph and the oak of Zaanannim, went to Adami Nekeb, Jabneel and on to Lakkum, and ended at the Jordan River. **34** It turned westward to Aznoth Tabor, extended from there to Hukok, touched Zebulun on the south, Asher on the west, and the Jordan on the east. **35** The fortified cities included Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Kinnereth, **36** Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, **37** Kedesh, Edrei, En Hazor, **38** Yiron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath, and Beth Shemesh. In all they had

nineteen cities and their towns. **39** This was the land assigned to the tribe of Naphtali by its clans, including the cities and their towns.

40 The seventh lot belonged to the tribe of Dan by its clans.

41 Their assigned land included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh,

42 Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, **43** Elon, Timnah, Ekron, **44**

Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, **45** Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath

Rimmon, **46** the waters of Jarkon, and Rakkon, including the

territory in front of Joppa. **47** (The Danites failed to conquer

their territory, so they went up and fought with Leshem and

captured it. They put the sword to it, took possession of it,

and lived in it. They renamed it Dan after their ancestor.) **48**

This was the land assigned to the tribe of Dan by its clans,

including these cities and their towns.

49 When they finished dividing the land into its regions, the

Israelites gave Joshua son of Nun some land. **50** As the LORD

had instructed, they gave him the city he requested -

Timnath Serah in the Ephraimite hill country.

He built up the city and lived in it.

51 These are the land assignments which Eleazar the priest,

Joshua son of Nun, and the Israelite tribal leaders made by

drawing lots in Shiloh before the LORD at the entrance of

the tent of meeting. So they finished dividing up the land.

1 The LORD instructed Joshua:

Guzik - Joshua 20:1-9

Joshua 20 - The Cities of Refuge

A. God commands the appointment of six cities of refuge.

1. (1-3) A place of refuge from the avenger of blood.

The LORD also spoke to Joshua, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'Appoint for yourselves cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses, that the slayer who kills a person accidentally *or* unintentionally may flee there; and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.'"

a. **Appoint for yourselves cities of refuge:** God now tells Joshua to fulfill what the LORD

had commanded through Moses in Numbers 35

- the appointment of six cities of refuge.

b. The purpose of the cities of refuge was to protect **the slayer who kills any person**

accidentally or unintentionally. They were to protect someone in the case of *manslaughter* as opposed to *murder*.

c. **And they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood**: Such a person needed protection against the **avenger of blood**. The Hebrew word for this phrase is *goel*, and in this context means the representative from the victim's family charged with making sure justice is carried out against the murderer of the family member.

i. God had a passion to make sure that murderers were punished in ancient Israel, and in that culture, the final responsibility for justice rested with the designated *goel*

(avenger of blood) in the family.

ii. The principle for capital punishment goes back to Gen. 9:6: *Whoever sheds man's*

blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man. The state's right to use the sword of execution is also

stated in the New Testament (Rom. 13:3-4).

iii. God said also that unpunished murderers defiled the land: *Moreover you shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death . . . So you shall not pollute the land where you are; for blood defiles the land, and no atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it. Therefore do not defile the land which you inhabit, in the midst of which I dwell; for I the LORD dwell among the children of Israel*. (Num. 35:31, 35:33-34).

iv. How long will our nation be polluted by the stain of unpunished murders? Not too many years ago, over one year in Los

Angeles County, they averaged *more than five murders a day*. The blood of the slain cries out before God.

d. The **avenger of blood** tracked down the murderer, and if necessary, delivered him over to the authorities for execution. This was

providing the testimony of two or three eyewitnesses could confirm the guilt of the murderer according to Deu. 17:6-7.

e. Since the **avenger of blood** might set himself against a person really guilty of

manslaughter (accidental or unintentional killing) instead of murder, the cities of refuge were established to protect the person innocent of murder.

2. (4) Entrance into the city of refuge.

And when he flees to one of those cities, and stands at the entrance of the gate of the city, and declares his case in the hearing of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city as one of them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.

a. **And declares his case in the hearing of the elders of that city:** According to custom, the elders of the city spent much time at the gates of the city. When someone fleeing from an avenger of blood came to a city of refuge, he stated his case to the elders at the city gates.

b. **They shall take him into the city as one of them:** After explaining the case, the fleeing person could expect to find protection within the walls of the city of refuge, though he would have to stay there, and live in the city, to enjoy that protection.

3. (5) Protection against the avenger of blood.

Then if the avenger of blood pursues him, they shall not deliver the slayer into his hand, because he struck his neighbor unintentionally, but did not hate him beforehand.

a. **They shall not deliver the slayer into his hand:** The leaders of a city of refuge were obliged to protect the one

who had fled to the city. The **avenger of blood** had no legal standing to deliver the slayer over to execution.

b. **Because he struck his neighbor unintentionally, but did not hate him**

beforehand: Israel had a sophisticated legal system, with judgments often based on intent and premeditation.

4. (6) Freedom for the slayer.

And he shall dwell in that city until he stands before the congregation for judgment, *and* until the death of the one who is high priest in those days. Then the slayer may return and come to his own city and his own house, to the city from which he fled.

a. **He shall dwell in that city until he**

stands before the congregation for

judgment, and until the death of the one

who is high priest in those days: To be protected against the avenger of blood, the

slayer had to stay within the walls of the city of refuge until his case was fully heard by the proper authorities, and until the death of the standing high priest.

b. Then the slayer may return and come to his own city: After being declared innocent of murder by the proper authorities, and after the death of the standing high priest, the slayer could go back to his home and be protected against the wrath of the avenger of blood.

B. Six cities selected for cities of refuge.

1. (7-8) The appointment of six cities.

So they appointed Kedesh in Galilee, in the mountains of Naphtali, Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and Kirjath Arba (which *is* Hebron) in the mountains of Judah. And on the other side of the Jordan, by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness on the plain, from the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead, from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh.

a. On a map, we see that the cities of refuge were well spaced throughout the country. No matter where you were in Israel, you were not very far from a city of refuge.

b. Deu. 19:2 tells us that proper roads were to be built and maintained to these cities of refuge.

The city was not much good to the slayer if they could not get to it quickly.

2. (9) The purpose for the cities of refuge is again stated.

These were the cities appointed for all the

children of Israel and for the stranger who dwelt among them, that whoever killed a person accidentally might flee there, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood until he stood before the congregation.

a. The cities of refuge were not only for the benefit of the Israelite, but also for the

stranger who sojourned among them.

God's justice applied to all without partiality.

3. The cities of refuge as a picture of Jesus.

a. The Bible applies this picture of the city of refuge to the believer finding refuge in God on more than one occasion:

i. Psa. 46:1: *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.* More than 15

other times, the Psalms speak of God as our refuge.

ii. Heb. 6:18: *That by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have*

fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

b. Points of similarity between the cities of refuge and our refuge in Jesus.



Both Jesus and the cities of refuge are *within easy reach* of the needy person; they were of no use unless someone could get to the place of refuge.



Both Jesus and the cities of refuge are *open to all*, not just the Israelite; no one needs to fear that they would be turned away from their place of refuge in their time of need.



Both Jesus and the cities of refuge became a place where the one in need would *live*; you didn't come to a city of refuge in time of need just to look around.



Both Jesus and the cities of refuge are the *only alternative* for the one in need; without this specific protection, they will be destroyed.



Both Jesus and the cities of refuge provide protection *only within their boundaries*; to go outside means death.



With both Jesus and the cities of refuge, full freedom comes with the *death of the High Priest*.

c. A crucial distinction between the cities of refuge and our refuge in Jesus.



The cities of refuge only helped the *innocent*, but the *guilty* can come to Jesus and find refuge.

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2 “Have the Israelites select the cities of refuge that I told you about through Moses. **3** Anyone who accidentally kills someone can escape there; these cities will be a place of asylum from the avenger of blood. **4** The one who committed manslaughter should escape to one of these cities, stand at the entrance of the city gate, and present his

case to the leaders of that city. They should then bring him into the city, give him a place to stay, and let him live there. **5** When the avenger of blood comes after him, they must not hand over to him the one who committed manslaughter, for he accidentally killed his fellow man without premeditation. **6** He must remain in that city until his case is decided by the assembly and the high priest dies. Then the one who committed manslaughter may return home to the city from which he escaped."

7 So they selected Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali, Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the hill country of Judah. **8** Beyond the Jordan east of Jericho they selected Bezer in the desert on the plain belonging to the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead belonging to the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan belonging to the tribe of Manasseh. **9** These were the cities of refuge appointed for all the Israelites and for resident foreigners living among them. Anyone who accidentally killed someone could escape there and not be executed by the avenger of blood, at least until his case was reviewed by the assembly.

1 The tribal leaders of the Levites went before Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun and the Israelite tribal leaders
Guzik - Joshua 21:1-45

Joshua 21 - Cities Appointed for the Levites

A. The people of the tribe of Levi receive their cities with their common lands.

1. (1-3) The leaders of the tribe of Levi ask for what was promised to them.

Then the heads of the fathers' *houses* of the Levites came near to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua the son of Nun, and to the heads of the fathers'

houses of the tribes of the children of Israel. And they spoke to them at Shiloh in the land of

Canaan, saying, "The LORD commanded through Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with their common-lands for our

livestock." So the children of Israel gave to the Levites from their

inheritance, at the commandment of the LORD, these cities and their common-lands:

a. The Levites received no "province" of land such as the other tribes did; however, they had to live somewhere. So, each tribe gave certain **cities** and **common-lands** (land immediately surrounding the cities) to the tribe of Levi.

b. The tribe of Levi had no "province" of land because God had declared that He would be their inheritance (Jos. 13:14, and 13:33).

2. (4-42) Cities are appointed to the Levites, according to their three main family divisions.

Now the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites. And the children of Aaron the priest, *who were* of the Levites, had thirteen cities by lot from the tribe of Judah, from the tribe of Simeon, and from the tribe of Benjamin. The rest of the children of Kohath had ten cities by lot from the families of the tribe of Ephraim, from the tribe of Dan, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh. And the children of Gershon had thirteen cities by lot from the families of the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan. The children of Merari according to their families had twelve cities from the tribe of Reuben, from the tribe of Gad, and from the tribe of Zebulun. And the children of Israel gave these cities with their common-lands by lot to the Levites, as the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses. So they

gave from the tribe of the children of Judah and from the tribe of the children of Simeon these cities which are designated by name, which were for the children of Aaron, one of the families of the Kohathites, *who were* of the children of Levi; for the lot was theirs first. And they gave them Kirjath Arba (*Arba was* the father of Anak), which *is* Hebron, in the mountains of Judah, with the common-land surrounding it. But the fields of the city and its villages they

gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as his possession. Thus to the children of Aaron the priest they gave Hebron with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer), Libnah with its common-land, Jattir with its common-land, Eshtemoa with its common-land, Holon with its common-land, Debir with its common-land, Ain with its common-land, Juttah with its common-land, and Beth Shemesh with its common-land: nine cities from those two tribes; and from the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with its common-land, Geba with its common-land,

Anathoth with its common-land, and Almon with its common-land: four cities. All the cities of the children of Aaron, the priests, *were* thirteen cities with their common-lands. And the families of the children of Kohath, the Levites, the rest of the children of Kohath, even they had the cities of their lot from the tribe of Ephraim. For they gave them Shechem with its common-land in the

mountains of Ephraim (a city of refuge for the slayer), Gezer with its common-land, Kibzaim with its common-land, and Beth Horon with its common-land: four cities; and from the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh with its common-land, Gibbethon with its common-land, Aijalon with its common-land, *and* Gath Rimmon with its common-land: four cities; and from the half-tribe of Manasseh, Tanach with its common-land and Gath Rimmon

with its common-land: two cities. All the ten cities with their common-lands were for the rest of the families of the children of Kohath. Also to the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites, from the *other* half-tribe of Manasseh, *they gave* Golan in Bashan with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer), and Be Eshterah with its common-land: two cities; and from the tribe of Issachar, Kishion with its common-land, Daberath with its common-land, Jarmuth with its common-land, *and* En Gannim with its common-land: four cities; and from the tribe of Asher, Mishal with its common-land, Abdon with its common-land,

Helkath with its common-land, and Rehob with its common-land: four cities; and from the tribe of Naphtali, Kedesh in Galilee with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer), Hammoth Dor with its common-land, and Kartan with its common-land: three cities. All the cities of the Gershonites according to their families *were* thirteen cities with their common-lands. And to the families of the children of Merari, the rest of the Levites, from the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with its common-land, Kartah with its common-land, Dimnah with its common-land, *and* Nahalal with its common-land: four cities; and from the tribe of Reuben, Bezer with its common-land, Jahaz with its common-land, Kedemoth with its common-land, and Mephaath with its common-land: four cities; and from the tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer), Mahanaim with its

common-land, Heshbon with its common-land, *and* Jazer with its common-land: four cities in all.

So all the cities for the children of Merari according to their families, the rest of the families of the Levites, were *by* their lot twelve cities. All the cities of the Levites within the possession of the children of Israel *were* forty-eight cities with their common-lands. Every one of these cities had its common-land surrounding it; thus *were* all these cities.

a. The striking thing about this list is that God wanted the Levites "sprinkled" all throughout the land of Israel. He never intended there to be one "state" of Levi, but every tribe was to have the priestly influence and presence in their midst.

i. In the same manner, Christians (being priests, 1Pe. 2:5 and 2:9) are to be "sprinkled" all throughout the world and society, instead of heading off to make a "Christian country" somewhere.

b. Perhaps it is also significant that the priests received their cities last of all the tribes. Priests are appointed to serve, not

to be served, and there is something priestly about letting others go first.

B. Israel takes full possession of the land.

1. (43) The land is Israel's, given to them by God.

So the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it.

a. All the tribes had their land. They must go into every corner of what God has given, and take full possession, but God had provided

everything necessary for them to do so.

2. (44) The rest in the land is Israel's, given to them by God.

The LORD gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand.

a. **The LORD gave them rest all around:** This is the point where Israel stopped

commemorating Passover as if equipped to

travel as described in Exo. 12:11). Now they will eat the Passover reclining at rest (as

described in Joh. 13:23), because the LORD had given them rest in the land.

3. (45) Not a word of God fails.

Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.

a. **Not a word failed of any good thing**

which the LORD had spoken: God was

completely faithful in regard to the land; but Israel was not. Any failure to fully possess was not because God had not made adequate

provision, but because Israel had failed to fully follow the LORD.

b. God has been completely faithful to you, and made provision for continual victory. He has given greatly unto you, but what do you

possess?

i. "In the light of the Cross, is it not true that the enemy has no right to dwell in the land?

Is it not true that Satan's claim to your life was taken from him at Calvary? Is it not

true that sin has no right to a foothold in the life of the child of God? Is it not true that Satan has no power in the presence of

Omnipotence? Is it not true that by virtue of His blood and His resurrection, Jesus Christ is pledged to destroy the enemy utterly? Is it not true that in the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit there is strength for every

temptation, grace for every trial, power to overcome every difficulty?" (Alan Redpath)

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2 in Shiloh in the land of Canaan and said, "The LORD told Moses to assign us cities in which to live along with the grazing areas for our cattle." **3** So the Israelites assigned these cities and their grazing areas to the Levites from their own holdings, as the LORD had instructed.

4 The first lot belonged to the Kohathite clans. The Levites who were descendants of Aaron the priest were allotted thirteen cities from the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. **5** The rest of Kohath's descendants were allotted ten cities from the clans of the tribe of Ephraim, and from the tribe of Dan and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

6 Gershon's descendants were allotted thirteen cities from the clans of the tribe of Issachar, and from the tribes of Asher and Naphtali and the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan. **7** Merari's descendants by their clans were allotted twelve cities from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

8 So the Israelites assigned to the Levites by lot these cities and their grazing areas, as the LORD had instructed Moses.

9 They assigned from the tribes of Judah and Simeon the cities listed below. **10** They were assigned to the Kohathite

clans of the Levites who were descendants of Aaron, for the first lot belonged to them. **11** They assigned them Kiriath Arba (Arba was the father of Anak), that is, Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, along with its surrounding grazing areas. **12** (Now the city's fields and surrounding towns they had assigned to Caleb son of Jephunneh as his property.) **13** So to the descendants of Aaron the priest they assigned Hebron (a city of refuge for one who committed manslaughter), Libnah, **14** Jattir, Eshtemoa, **15** Holon, Debir, **16** Ain, Juttah, and Beth Shemesh, along with the grazing areas of each – a total of nine cities taken from these two tribes. **17** From the tribe of Benjamin they assigned Gibeon, Geba, **18** Anathoth, and Almon, along with the grazing areas of each – a total of four cities. **19** The priests descended from Aaron received thirteen cities and their grazing areas. **20** The rest of the Kohathite clans of the Levites were allotted cities from the tribe of Ephraim. **21** They assigned them Shechem (a city of refuge for one who committed manslaughter) in the hill country of Ephraim, Gezer, **22** Kibzaim, and Beth Horon, along with the grazing areas of each – a total of four cities. **23** From the tribe of Dan they assigned Eltekeh, Gibbethon, **24** Aijalon, and Gath Rimmon, along with the grazing areas of each – a total of four cities. **25** From the half-tribe of Manasseh they assigned Taanach and Gath Rimmon, along with the grazing areas of each – a total of two cities. **26** The rest of the Kohathite clans received ten cities and their grazing areas. **27** They assigned to the Gershonite clans of the Levites the following cities: from the half-tribe of Manasseh: Golan in Bashan (a city of refuge for one who committed manslaughter) and Beeshtarah, along with the grazing areas of each – a total of two cities; **28** from the tribe of Issachar: Kishon, Daberath, **29** Jarmuth, and En Gannim, along with the grazing areas of each – a total of four cities; **30** from the tribe of Asher: Mishal, Abdon, **31** Helkath, and Rehob, along with the grazing areas of each

- a total of four cities; **32** from the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee (a city of refuge for one who committed manslaughter), Hammoth Dor, and Kartan, along with the grazing areas of each - a total of three cities. **33** The Gershonite clans received thirteen cities and their grazing areas.

34 They assigned to the Merarite clans (the remaining Levites) the following cities: from the tribe of Zebulun: Jokneam, Kartah, **35** Dimnah, and Nahalal, along with the grazing areas of each - a total of four cities; **36** from the tribe of Reuben: Bezer, Jahaz, **37** Kedemoth, and Mephaath, along with the grazing areas of each - a total of four cities; **38** from the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead (a city of refuge for one who committed manslaughter), Mahanaim, **39** Heshbon, and Jazer, along with the grazing areas of each - a total of four cities. **40** The Merarite clans (the remaining Levites) were allotted twelve cities.

41 The Levites received within the land owned by the Israelites forty-eight cities in all and their grazing areas. **42** Each of these cities had grazing areas around it; they were alike in this regard.

43 So the LORD gave Israel all the land he had solemnly promised to their ancestors, and they conquered it and lived in it. **44** The LORD made them secure, in fulfillment of all he had solemnly promised their ancestors. None of their enemies could resist them. **45** Not one of the LORD's faithful promises to the family of Israel was left unfulfilled; every one was realized.

1 Then Joshua summoned the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh

Guzik - Joshua 22:1-34

Joshua 22 - A Misunderstanding Reconciled

A. The armies from the tribes east of the Jordan are sent home.

1. (1-4) Joshua thanks them for a job well done.

Then Joshua called the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, and said to them:

"You have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you. You have not left your brethren these many days, up to this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God. And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brethren, as He promised them; now therefore, return and go to your tents *and* to the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan."

a. You have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you: In the seven years they had been with Joshua, helping the tribes west of the Jordan to conquer their enemies, they had been completely obedient and helpful to Joshua.

b. You have not left your brethren these many days: They had gone out and fought on behalf of their brethren, even though they already had their own inheritance - even as God commanded them to do.

c. Now therefore, return and go to your tents and to the land of your possession: Now that the land was conquered and fully distributed to the tribes, they could go back to their families and lands on the eastern side of the Jordan.

2. (5-6) Before they leave, Joshua gives them an exhortation and a blessing.

"But take careful heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His

commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul." So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

a. He tells them to **take diligent heed** to the word of God, probably here mostly in the sense of carefully hearing it and knowing it.

b. He tells them to **love** the *LORD*. This is a matter of the heart, but it can still be commanded.

c. He tells them to **obey** God with all they have, to **keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him** in a personal sense, and to **serve Him** with all your heart and soul.

i. We should not miss the order here. First we should take care to *hear* God. Then we give Him our *love*. Next comes a walk of *obedience*. To mix this order up is to get off into heresy (loving without hearing) or legalism (obeying before loving).

d. **So Joshua blessed them and sent them**

away: Joshua will not send them away with a blessing; he knows that they cannot do or be what God wants without His blessing in their lives.

i. Perhaps he used the blessing from Num.

6:23-27: *Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them: "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace."' So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them.*

3. (7-9) The armies of the two and a half tribes depart, with much spoil.

Now to half the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a possession in Bashan, but to the *other* half of it Joshua gave *a possession* among their brethren on this side

of the Jordan, westward.

And indeed, when Joshua sent them away to their tents, he blessed them, and spoke to them, saying, "Return with much riches to your tents, with very much livestock, with silver, with gold, with bronze, with iron, and with very much

clothing. Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren." So the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of

Israel at Shiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan, to go to the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, which they had obtained according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

a. **Return with much riches to your tents:** Their obedience to God and faithfulness to their brethren has been rewarded. God has allowed them to gain much plunder that they can take back home with them.

i. We believe that when we obey God, we will be gainers, not losers. Perhaps not always in this obvious material sense, but in real, wonderful gains none the less.

b. **So the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children**

of Israel at Shiloh: We might imagine that this was a somewhat emotional departure of brothers who had known the closeness of fighting side-by-side. These were true veterans of the army of Israel.

B. The incident of the altar by the Jordan.

1. (10) The eastern tribes make an impressive altar.

And when they came to the region of the Jordan which *is* in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh built an altar there by the Jordan; a great, impressive altar.

a. Before crossing over the Jordan, the soldiers from the two and a half tribes build a **great, impressive altar** near the Jordan River.

b. This was significant not only because of its size, but because of the *meaning* of an altar.

An altar was a place of sacrifice, and both the Israelites and pagans had altars they used for sacrifice.

2. (11-12) The tribes west of the Jordan river learn of the great altar.

Now the children of Israel heard *someone* say,

"Behold, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh have built an altar on the frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region of the Jordan; on the children of Israel's side." And when the children of Israel heard *of it*, the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered together at Shiloh to go to war against them.

a. **Behold, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of**

Manasseh have built an altar: When the news comes to the rest of Israel, there is no discussion, there is a simple reaction. They gathered to make war against their own brothers who built this altar.

i. Notice that Joshua does not need to gather them, they gather of own accord. It was an automatic reaction.

b. Why did they do this? Because they feared that this altar was a sign of allegiance to the pagan gods of the region.

c. Their readiness to fight this battle shows great courage to confront on behalf of God's truth and holiness. This was a healthy "body,"

able to purge itself of poisons.

i. Their later actions show that they are not *happy* about taking this action, nor will they do it *rashly* - *but they will do it!*

3. (13-15) Before action is taken, Phinehas the High Priest, and representatives from each tribe west of the Jordan

personally confront the leaders of the tribes east of the Jordan.

Then the children of Israel sent Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest to the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, and with him ten rulers, one ruler each from the chief house of every tribe of Israel; and each one *was* the head of the house of his father among the divisions of Israel. Then they came to the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, to the land of Gilead, and they spoke with them, saying,

a. **Phinehas** led the group, because he had the authority. He was High Priest over the whole nation, including the two and one-half tribes on the east side of the Jordan. He not only had the authority, he also had the heart of a wise shepherd. He wanted to correct the erring, to protect the nation, and to drive out the dangerous.

d. Israel reacts according to God's character. Their assembling for war demonstrated God's holiness, but their personal confrontation demonstrated God's love.

4. (16-18) Phinehas brings the accusation against the eastern tribes.

Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD:

"What treachery *is* this that you have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that you have built for yourselves an altar, that you might rebel this day against the LORD? *Is* the iniquity of Peor not enough for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD, but that you must

turn away this day from following the LORD? And it shall be, if you rebel today against the LORD, that tomorrow He will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel."

a. **What treachery is this:** Clearly, they thought that the altar at the Jordan represented a *rival* place of sacrifice and worship, to compete with God's tabernacle, presently at Shiloh.

i. God had clearly commanded that there was one place of sacrifice and burnt offerings for Israel: *Also you shall say to them: Whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice, and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to offer it to the LORD, that man shall be cut off from among his people.* (Lev. 17:8-9)

ii. We understand from this that we cannot worship God any way we please, or justify a manner of worship just because we like it.

First and always, our worship must be pleasing to God. We must worship Him in *spirit* and in *truth*. (Joh. 4:24) b. **Is the iniquity of Peor not enough for us:** Phinehas reminds the eastern tribes that Israel has been punished for rebellion against God before, using the rebellion at **Peor** as an example.

i. At Peor, Israel's men had sex with Moabite women, and they gave themselves over to the worship of the Moabite gods. In judgment, God sent a plague that killed 24,000 people.

ii. This incident would be especially meaningful to Phinehas, because he was the one who stopped the plague by making a dramatic stand for righteousness in the midst of gross sin.

c. **He will be angry with the whole congregation:** Phinehas also knew that the sin of these tribes would reflect on the whole nation. He knew that no one really sins unto himself.

5. (19) A willingness to sacrifice to keep a brother from sin.

Nevertheless, if the land of your possession *is* unclean, *then* cross over to the land of the possession of the LORD, where the Lord's

tabernacle stands, and take possession among us; but do not rebel against the LORD, nor rebel against us, by building yourselves an altar

besides the altar of the LORD our God.

a. **Take possession among us:** To Phinehas, *anything* was better than seeing these tribes go off in rebellion against God. If there was

something **unclean** in their land, he invited them to come and live with the tribes on the western side of the Jordan.

b. This was an invitation made at great cost. It would have meant a must smaller area of land for the western tribes. But it didn't matter, because they were willing to *sacrifice* to see their brothers free from this sin.

i. Too many of us lack this willingness; we tell people to stop sinning, but are not willing to help them if it costs us something.

6. (20) A second example of the price of sin: the sin of Achan and its affect on all of Israel is remembered.

Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel? And that man did not perish alone in his iniquity.

7. (21-23) The eastern tribes respond.

Then the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh answered and said to the heads of the divisions of Israel: "The LORD

God of gods, the LORD God of gods, He knows, and let Israel itself know; if *it is* in rebellion, or if in treachery against the LORD, do not save us this day. If we have built ourselves an altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer on it burnt offerings or grain offerings, or if to offer peace offerings on it, let the LORD Himself

require *an account*. "

a. **The LORD God of gods, the LORD God of**

gods, He knows: They first appeal to God, because He knows for certain their hearts, and they believe that their brothers in the western tribes have misunderstood them.

i. When we are misunderstood, our first refuge is God. He knows our heart, and we must be satisfied with being right before God even if it means we are wrong in the eyes of some others.

b. **If it is in rebellion, or if in treachery against the LORD, do not save us this day:** They also recognized the rightness of what the others were doing in coming against them.

i. The eastern tribes do what we should all do when we are misunderstood: put ourselves in the shoes of the other person and try to see what they see. If we saw what they saw, we might respond in the same way.

8. (24-29) The eastern tribes explain their true reason for building the altar: it was built as a memorial, not as a place of sacrifice.

"But in fact we have done it for fear, for a reason, saying, 'In time to come your descendants may speak to our descendants, saying, "What have you to do with the LORD God of Israel? For the LORD has made the Jordan a border between you and us, *you* children of Reuben and children of Gad. You have no part in the LORD." So your descendants would make our descendants cease fearing the LORD.' Therefore we said, 'Let us now prepare to build ourselves an altar, not for burnt offering nor for sacrifice, but *that it may be* a witness between you and us and our generations after us, that we may

perform the service of the LORD before Him with our burnt offerings, with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings; that your descendants may not say to our descendants in time to come, "You have no part in the LORD." Therefore we said that it will be, when they say *this* to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say,

'Here is the replica of the altar of the LORD which our fathers made, though not for burnt offerings nor for sacrifices; but it *is* a witness between you and us.' Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn from following the LORD this day, to build an altar for burnt offerings, for grain offerings, or for sacrifices, besides the altar of the LORD our God which *is* before His tabernacle."

a. **An altar, not for burnt offering nor for sacrifice, but that it may be a witness:** The eastern tribes recognized their distance from the center of worship in Israel, and that there was a natural barrier (the Jordan River) between them and the rest of the nation. So they built the altar a memorial to link the two segments of the nation.

b. They built it so big and impressive so that it would last. They wanted it to stand as a memorial to future generations that the tribes on both sides of the Jordan worshipped the same God.

c. The eastern tribes again *agree with the concern* of the western tribes; but they explain that the western tribes have misunderstood the meaning of the great, impressive altar.

9. (30-31) The explanation of the eastern tribes is accepted by the western tribes.

Now when Phinehas the priest and the rulers of the congregation, the heads of the divisions of Israel who *were* with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh spoke, it pleased them.

Then Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the children of

Manasseh, "This day we perceive that the LORD *is* among us, because you have not committed this treachery against the LORD. Now you have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD."

a. **Now when Phinehas the priest . . . heard the words . . . it pleased them:** Obviously, Phinehas is pleased by this explanation; yet he deserves credit for being willing to believe his brothers. Phinehas puts himself in the shoes of the eastern tribes now, and so the explanation makes sense.

b. **This day we perceive that the LORD is among us, because you have not**

committed this treachery against the

LORD: Phinehas could see that the **LORD was among us**, because unity had been restored among the people of Israel. This fulfilled the passage from Psa. 133:1: *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*

10. (32-34) Epilogue: the matter is resolved.

And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the rulers, returned from the children of Reuben and the children of Gad, from the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought back word to them. So the thing

pleased the children of Israel, and the children of Israel blessed God; they spoke no more of going against them in battle, to destroy the land where the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt. The

children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar, *Witness*, "For *it is* a witness between us that the LORD *is* God."

a. **So the thing pleased the children of**

Israel, and the children of Israel blessed God:

Everyone is glad, and everyone enjoys the blessing of having peace among the people of God.

b. **The children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar, Witness:** The altar is given the name **Witness**, because it was a witness to the tribes on both the eastern side and the western side of the Jordan **that the LORD is God.**

11. We should respond to misunderstanding in the same manner, according to these same principles.

a. Respond with a concern for God's holiness.

- b. Respond with the courage to confront in love.
- c. Respond with an attempt to reconcile before you fight.
- d. Determine that you are willing to sacrifice to help them; don't confront unless you are willing to help.
- e. Determine that you will see the situation from the perspective of the other person.
- f. Determine that you will believe the best of one another.

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2 and told them: “You have carried out all the instructions of Moses the LORD’s servant, and you have obeyed all I have told you. **3** You have not abandoned your fellow Israelites this entire time, right up to this very day. You have completed the task given you by the LORD

your God. **4** Now the LORD your God has made your fellow Israelites secure, just as he promised them. So now you may turn around and go to your homes in your own land which Moses the LORD’s servant assigned to you east of the Jordan.

5 But carefully obey the commands and instructions Moses the LORD’s servant gave you. Love the LORD your God, follow all his instructions, obey his commands, be loyal to him, and serve him with all your heart and being!”

6 Joshua rewarded them and sent them on their way; they returned to their homes. **7** (Now to one half-tribe of Manasseh, Moses had assigned land in Bashan; and to the other half Joshua had assigned land on the west side of the Jordan with their fellow Israelites.) When Joshua sent them home, he rewarded them, **8** saying, “Take home great wealth, a lot of cattle, silver, gold, bronze, iron, and a lot of clothing. Divide up the goods captured from your enemies with your brothers.” **9** So the Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh left the Israelites in Shiloh in the land of Canaan and headed home to their own land in Gilead, which they acquired by the LORD’s command through Moses.

10 The Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh came to Geliloth near the Jordan in the land of Canaan and

built there, near the Jordan, an impressive altar. **11**

The Israelites received this report: “Look, the Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh have built an altar at the entrance to the land of Canaan, at Geliloth near the Jordan on the Israelite side.” **12** When the Israelites heard this, the entire Israelite community assembled at Shiloh to launch an attack against them.

13 The Israelites sent Phinehas, son of Eleazar, the priest, to the land of Gilead to the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. **14** He was accompanied by ten leaders, one from each of the Israelite tribes, each one a family leader among the Israelite clans. **15** They went to the land of Gilead to the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and said to them: **16** “The entire community of the LORD says, ‘Why have you disobeyed the God of Israel by turning back today from following the LORD? You built an altar for yourselves and have rebelled today against the LORD. **17** The sin we committed at Peor was bad enough. To this very day we have not purified ourselves; it even brought a plague on the community of the LORD. **18** Now today you dare to turn back from following the LORD! You are rebelling today against the LORD; tomorrow he may break out in anger against the entire community of Israel. **19** But if your own land is impure, cross over to the LORD’s own land, where the LORD himself lives, and settle down among us. But don’t rebel against the LORD or us by building for yourselves an altar aside from the altar of the LORD our God. **20** When Achan son of Zerah disobeyed the command about the city’s riches, the entire Israelite community was judged, though only one man had sinned.

He most certainly died for his sin!’”

21 The Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered the leaders of the Israelite clans: **22**

“El, God, the LORD! El, God, the LORD! He knows the truth! Israel must also know! If we have rebelled or disobeyed the LORD, don’t spare us today! **23** If we have built an altar for

ourselves to turn back from following the LORD by making burnt sacrifices and grain offerings on it, or by offering tokens of peace on it, the LORD himself will punish us. **24** We swear we have done this because we were worried that in the future your descendants would say to our descendants, 'What relationship do you have with the LORD God of Israel? **25** The LORD made the Jordan a boundary between us and you Reubenites and Gadites. You have no right to worship the LORD.' In this way your descendants might cause our descendants to stop obeying the LORD. **26** So we decided to build this altar, not for burnt offerings and sacrifices, **27** but as a reminder to us and you, and to our descendants who follow us, that we will honor the LORD in his very presence with burnt offerings, sacrifices, and tokens of peace. Then in the future your descendants will not be able to say to our descendants, 'You have no right to worship the LORD.' **28** We said, 'If in the future they say such a thing to us or to our descendants, we will reply, "See the model of the LORD's altar that our ancestors made, not for burnt offerings or sacrifices, but as a reminder to us and you."' **29** Far be it from us to rebel against the LORD by turning back today from following after the LORD by building an altar for burnt offerings, sacrifices, and tokens of peace aside from the altar of the LORD our God located in front of his dwelling place!"

30 When Phinehas the priest and the community leaders and clan leaders who accompanied him heard the defense of the Reubenites, Gadites, and the Manassehites, they were satisfied. **31** Phinehas, son of Eleazar, the priest, said to the Reubenites, Gadites, and the Manassehites, "Today we know that the LORD is among us, because you have not disobeyed the LORD in this. Now you have rescued the Israelites from the LORD's judgment."

32 Phinehas, son of Eleazar, the priest, and the leaders left the Reubenites and Gadites in the land of Gilead and reported back to the Israelites in the land of Canaan. **33**

The Israelites were satisfied with their report and gave thanks to God. They said nothing more about launching an attack to destroy the land in which the Reubenites and Gadites lived. **34** The Reubenites and Gadites named the altar, "Surely it is a Reminder to us that the LORD is God."

1 A long time passed after the LORD made Israel secure from all their enemies, and Joshua was very old.

Guzik - Joshua 23:1-16

Joshua 23 - Joshua's Farewell Address

A. The first exhortation: total obedience to the Word of God.

1. (1-3) Joshua declares what the LORD has done.

Now it came to pass, a long time after the LORD had given rest to Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua was old, advanced in age. And Joshua called for all Israel, for their elders, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers, and said to them: "I am old, advanced in age. You have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations because of you, for the LORD your God *is* He who has fought for you."

a. **Joshua called for all Israel:** Joshua, in his old age, gathers the leadership of Israel together to give them a farewell address, to communicate to them the things that are, to his heart, the most important for them to hear.

i. Joshua *can't*, as a practical matter, speak to the whole nation, so he speaks to the leaders: **elders, heads, judges, and officers**. He can reach the entire nation by communicating well to the leaders.

b. **You have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations because of you, for the LORD your God is He who has fought for you:** Joshua begins his address by giving glory to God. It would have been easy for Joshua to focus on what *he* had done as a military leader, especially because it was impressive. But he is far

more interested in glorifying God than talking about himself.

2. (4-5) Joshua describes the challenges that remain.

See, I have divided to you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from the Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, as far as the Great Sea westward. And the LORD your God will expel them from before you and drive them out of your sight. So you shall possess their land, as the LORD your God promised you.

a. **I have divided to you by lot these**

nations that remain: Under Joshua's leadership, the army of Israel broke the back of the Canaanite military occupation. Now it remains for each individual tribe to fully possess what God has given them.

b. In the same way, God gives every believer an inheritance. We have been *blessed . . . with every spiritual blessing . . . in Christ* (Eph. 1:3), and God has a definite part for us to play in coming to possess that inheritance.

3. (6) How Israel will succeed: by total obedience to the word of God.

Therefore be very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, lest you turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left,

a. They need to be **courageous** so they can be obedient. Following God and His word isn't something for the faint of heart.

b. They must do **all that is written in the Book**. We tend to focus on the aspects of obedience that we like and skip over the parts that attract us less.

c. They must not **turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left**, because Satan doesn't care which extreme he gets us off to.

Either legalism or licentiousness please him.

B. The second exhortation: don't make peace with the enemy.

1. (7-8) Hold fast to the LORD.

And lest you go among these nations, these who remain among you. You shall not make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause *anyone* to swear *by them*; you shall not serve them nor bow down to them, but you shall hold fast to the LORD your God, as you have done to this day.

a. **You shall not make mention of the name of their gods:** Joshua tells Israel to not even make mention of these false gods of the Canaanites. Instead of learning about them, they should **hold fast to the LORD** their God.

b. An old Mafia saying says something to the effect of, "Keep your friends close, but your enemies even closer" but this is exactly what Christians *are not* to do. The normal Christian, by and large, is not called to become an expert in the cults or in heresy, but to become an expert in Jesus Christ - to hold fast to Him.

2. (9-13) Their abiding had been blessed, so if they fail to abide in the LORD, they will also depart from God's blessing. For the LORD has driven out from before you great and strong nations; but *as for* you, no one has been able to stand against you to this day.

One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the LORD your God *is* He who fights for you, as He promised you. Therefore take careful heed to yourselves, that you love the LORD your God. Or else, if indeed you do go back, and cling to the remnant of these nations; these that remain among you; and make marriages with them, and go in to them and they to you, know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you.

a. **For the LORD has driven out from before you great and strong nations:** As Israel abided in the LORD, they saw God do

great things through them. As they continued to abide, they would continue to see great things as God fights on their behalf.

b. **Love the LORD your God:** This is what they must be careful to do. They must, as Jude puts it, *keep yourselves in the love of God* (Jude 21).

i. Continually loving the LORD takes diligence. There are many things both within us and outside of us to draw us away from that love.

ii. This call to love God is an appeal to the *will*. We first *decide* to love God, even if the feelings don't come first.

c. **If indeed you do go back, and cling to the remnant of these nations:** Continuing in God's love will mean that they keep themselves separate from the ungodly influences around

them; they must keep themselves *unspotted from the world* (Jam. 1:27).

d. **They shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in**

your eyes, until you perish: If they do not separate themselves from the ungodly influences around them, those influences will become to them instruments of torture, leading to their destruction.

i. What today is only an "innocent Canaanite" in our lives may become a torture and a snare tomorrow.

ii. "How often we see that the temptation we have pampered and encouraged and

indulged in has become a scourge and a

thorn in our side. The compromising

Christian is not a happy man. Let the enemy

remain in a Christian life, let him have one foothold, and he soon becomes a

scourge." (Redpath)

iii. These ungodly influences never advertise themselves as instruments of torture; they present themselves as wonderful things - but we must see past all this.

C. The warning: God's faithfulness works both ways.

1. (14) Joshua asks each man to prove God's faithfulness in his own heart.

Behold, this day I *am* going the way of all the earth. And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke

concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed.

a. **You know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed:** Joshua requires that every man probe deep

within, and see if there is every a time in his lives when he could rightly accuse God of unfaithfulness to us.

b. **All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed:** If we *think* there could be such a legitimate accusation, it shows we know little of the God we claim to know.

2. (15-16) As surely as God has been faithful to bless their obedience under Joshua, He will be faithful to curse their later disobedience.

Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all the good things have come upon you which the

LORD your God promised you, so the LORD will bring upon you all harmful things, until He has destroyed you from this good land which the

LORD your God has given you. When you have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed down to them,

then the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and you shall perish quickly from the good land which He has given you.

a. As all the good things have come upon you which the LORD your God promised you, so the LORD will bring upon you all

harmful things: Joshua merely repeats the principle of blessing for obedience and cursing for disobedience that was a specific part of Israel's covenant with God (Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28). He emphasizes that God will be just as faithful to judge as He had been to bless.

b. We relate to God under a different covenant, a new and better covenant (Heb. 8:6-7), by which Jesus has *redeemed us from the curse of the law* (Gal. 3:10-14).

c. Therefore, in Jesus we no longer can experience God's "faithfulness to curse us" as Israel knew it. Yet we do experience God's faithfulness to correct us as a loving Father (Heb. 12:7), and we do experience a lack of appropriated blessing if we do not abide in Jesus.

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2 So Joshua summoned all Israel, including the elders, rulers, judges, and leaders, and told them: "I am very old.

3 You saw everything the LORD your God did to all these nations on your behalf, for the LORD your God fights for you.

4 See, I have parceled out to your tribes these remaining nations, from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea in the west, including all the nations I defeated. **5** The LORD your God will drive them out from before you and remove them, so you can occupy their land as the LORD

your God promised you. **6** Be very strong! Carefully obey all that is written in the law scroll of Moses so you won't swerve from it to the right or the left, **7** or associate with these

nations that remain near you. You must not invoke or make solemn declarations by the names of their gods!

You must not worship or bow down to them! **8** But you must be loyal to the LORD your God, as you have been to this very day.

9 “The LORD drove out from before you great and mighty nations; no one has been able to resist you to this very day.

10 One of you makes a thousand run away, for the LORD your God fights for you as he promised you he would. **11**

Watch yourselves carefully! Love the LORD your God! **12**

But if you ever turn away and make alliances with these nations that remain near you, and intermarry with them and establish friendly relations with them, **13** know for certain that the LORD our God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. They will trap and ensnare you; they will be a whip that tears your sides and thorns that blind your eyes until you disappear from this good land the LORD your God gave you.

14 “Look, today I am about to die. You know with all your heart and being that not even one of all the faithful promises the LORD your God made to you is left unfulfilled; every one was realized – not one promise is unfulfilled! **15**

But in the same way every faithful promise the LORD your God made to you has been realized, it is just as certain, if you disobey, that the LORD will bring on you every judgment until he destroys you from this good land which the LORD your God gave you. **16** If you violate the covenantal laws of the LORD your God which he commanded you to keep, and follow, worship, and bow down to other gods, the LORD will be very angry with you and you will disappear quickly from the good land which he gave to you.”

1 Joshua assembled all the Israelite tribes at Shechem.

He summoned Israel’s elders, rulers, judges, and leaders, and they appeared before God.

Guzik - Joshua 24:1-33

Joshua 24 - The Covenant Renewed

A. Joshua recounts God's great works on Israel's behalf.

1. (1) Joshua speaks to the nation again, through its leaders. Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and called for the elders of Israel, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God.

a. This may or may not be part of the same farewell described in Joshua 23. No specific place of gathering is mentioned in Joshua 23, so it could have been part of this same meeting at Shechem.

2. (2-13) Speaking prophetically, Joshua recounts the history of God's faithfulness to Israel.

And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Your fathers, *including* Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River, led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him

Isaac. To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I gave the mountains of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. Also I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to what I did among them. Afterward I brought you out. Then I brought your fathers out of

Egypt, and you came to the sea; and the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. So they cried out to the LORD; and He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, brought the sea upon them, and covered them. And your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. Then you dwelt in the wilderness a long time. And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan, and they fought with you. But I gave them into your hand, that you might possess their land, and I destroyed them from before you.

Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab,

arose to make war against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you. But I would not listen to Balaam; therefore he continued to bless you. So I delivered you out of his hand. Then you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And the men of Jericho fought against you; *also* the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But I delivered them into your hand. I sent the hornet before you which drove them out from before you, *also* the two kings of the Amorites, *but* not with your sword or with your bow. I have given you a land for which you did not labor, and cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant."

a. This is prophecy, because Joshua begins by saying **Thus says the Lord GOD of Israel.**

Yet, there is nothing *predictive* in this opening passage. Prophecy is not necessarily a prediction of the future. It can simply be a uniquely direct and spontaneous word from God.

i. We often want to "over-supernaturalize" the work of God. The gift of prophecy can operate in a powerful, yet natural way.

b. **Then I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River:** Before God challenges Israel, He reminds them of His faithfulness. A brief history lesson is given, which declares this.

c. Notice what is missing from God's review of Israel's history: Their failures are strangely forgotten. Later, God said *their sin I will remember no more* (Jer. 31:34). Here, He seems to have "forgotten" Israel's past sin.

i. However, we are told were they all started - as idol worshippers, including Abraham. Jewish legends claim Abraham worshipped

the true God from his youth, and have interesting stories about Abraham smashing all the idols in his father's idol shop, but we have no Biblical reason to believe they are true.

B. Choosing to covenant with the LORD.

1. (14) The challenge: serve God exclusively.

Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD!

a. **Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve**

Him in sincerity and in truth: This was not a blind leap of faith. They saw God's works and experienced His blessings, so it made *sense* for them to exclusively serve a God who had done so much for them.

b. **Serve the LORD!** Yet, for us, this is the difficult part - staying faithful to God after we have received much blessing from Him; the

ease that can come with blessing can be a subtle enemy of serving God **in sincerity and truth.**

i. "The best test of sincerity is not always the open hostility of foes, for this often braces up the energies of combat, while at the

same time it makes the path of duty clear.

Still less is it at the hour of triumph over our foes, then there is no temptation to rebel.

The real test of our faithfulness to God is in most cases is our power to continue

steadfastly in one course of conduct when the excitement of conflict is removed, and the enemies with which we have to contend are the insidious allurements of ease or custom amid the common place duties of life." (Redpath)

2. (15) Choose God or choose your alternative.

And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers

served that *were* on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

a. **Choose for yourselves this day whom**

you will serve: Joshua commands them to choose **whom you will serve**, not *if* you will serve. We will all serve someone - either the devil (intentionally or not), or the LORD. We really are not left the option of not serving anyone.

b. **But as for me and my house, we will**

serve the LORD: Joshua, as a wise man, sees the situation sensibly - he makes the intelligent choice to say **as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**

i. Joshua also understood that he, as the priest of his family, was charged with the responsibility to see that his whole **house** served **the LORD**. He had the job of representing his whole house before God.

c. **But as for me and my house** indicates that Joshua was determined on this course no matter what anyone else thought. His relationship with God was not based on any man, but on the LORD alone, and he would serve God no matter what anyone else did.

d. Inherent in Joshua's declaration is that he would **serve the LORD alone**. He would not **serve the LORD and** someone or something else. There was one God in his life, and that God was the LORD.

3. (16-18) The nation gives a great response; they also will serve the LORD.

So the people answered and said: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve

other gods; for the LORD our God *is* He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed. And the LORD drove out from before us all the people, including the Amorites who dwelt in the land. We also will serve the LORD, for He *is* our God."

a. For the LORD our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the

land of Egypt: Significantly, their declaration is based on God's past dealings with them. How could they *not* serve such a great God?

b. We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God: This is essentially the same attitude reflected by Jesus' disciples in Joh. 6:66-69: *Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.* If serving God sometimes seems hard, think of the alternatives.

4. (19-21) Joshua cautions against a lightly made commitment.

But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the LORD, for He *is* a holy God. He *is* a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you, after He has done you good."

And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD!"

a. You cannot serve the LORD, for He is a holy God: Joshua is not trying to discourage their faith, but trying to discourage a light commitment to following the LORD. They need to be reminded that they are serving God under a covenant that *promised* they would be cursed for disobedience.

i. Jesus expressed the same kind of warning that following Him took total commitment in Luk. 14:25-33. It isn't that Jesus doesn't

want followers, but He does not want lightly made and easily broken commitments.

b. **No, but we will serve the LORD!** This was the response Joshua wanted: a commitment, but made with full understanding of the consequences.

5. (22-28) A covenant renewed.

So Joshua said to the people, "You *are* witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD for yourselves, to serve Him." And they said, "*We are* witnesses!" "Now therefore," *he said*, "put away the foreign gods which *are* among you, and incline your heart to the LORD

God of Israel." And the people said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!" So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

Then Joshua

wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God.

And he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD. And Joshua said to all the people, "Behold, this stone shall be a witness to us, for it has heard all the words of the LORD which He spoke to us. It shall therefore be a witness to you, lest you deny your God." So Joshua let the people depart, each to his own inheritance.

a. **You are witnesses . . . this stone shall be a witness:** Joshua required that the covenant be confirmed by the testimony of two witnesses, the people and the stone. Therefore, this was a binding covenant before God (Deu. 19:15).

b. We should not fall short in our own need to re-establish our own covenant with the LORD.

Rededication to God can be a wonderful and powerful thing.

C. The death of Joshua and Eleazar.

1. (29-31) A beautiful epitaph for Joshua.

Now it came to pass after these things that

Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* one hundred and ten years old. And they buried him within the border of his

inheritance at Timnath Serah, which *is* in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of

Mount Gaash. Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had known all the works of the LORD which He had done for Israel.

a. **Being one hundred and ten years old:** Joshua dies at a ripe old age, and is buried in the land of his own inheritance.

b. **Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua:** This was the greatest legacy of Joshua. His godly influence was effectively communicated to and through the whole nation.

2. (32) The burial of Joseph's bones.

The bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel had brought up out of Egypt, they buried at

Shechem, in the plot of ground which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of

Shechem for one hundred pieces of silver, and which had become an inheritance of the children of Joseph.

a. **The bones of Joseph:** This may seem like an inconsequential point, but it fulfills Gen.

50:25. God likes to tie up loose ends. This is also mentioned in Heb. 11:22 as an example of Joseph's faith.

3. (33) The death and burial of Eleazar.

And Eleazar the son of Aaron died. They buried him in a hill *belonging to* Phinehas his son, which was given to him in the mountains of Ephraim.

a. **And Eleazar the son of Aaron died:** Eleazar's death meant that another link with the wilderness generation had passed. Now

Phinehas was High Priest.

b. As the generations pass, they are each challenged to conquer the land of blessing and promise that God has for them - and we will do it, as they pay close heed to our Joshua, to Jesus Christ.

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2 Joshua told all the people, "Here is what the LORD God of Israel says: 'In the distant past your ancestors lived beyond the Euphrates River, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor. They worshiped other gods, **3** but I took your father Abraham from beyond the Euphrates and brought him into the entire land of Canaan. I made his descendants numerous; I gave him Isaac, **4** and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I assigned Mount Seir, while Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt. **5** I sent Moses and Aaron, and I struck Egypt down when I intervened in their land. Then I brought you out. **6** When I brought your fathers out of Egypt, you arrived at the sea.

The Egyptians chased your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. **7** Your fathers cried out for help to the LORD; he made the area between you and the Egyptians dark, and then drowned them in the sea. You witnessed with your very own eyes what I did in Egypt.

You lived in the wilderness for a long time. **8** Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites who lived east of the Jordan. They fought with you, but I handed them over to you; you conquered their land and I destroyed them from before you.

9 Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, launched an attack against Israel. He summoned Balaam son of Beor to call down judgment on you. **10** I refused to respond to Balaam; he kept prophesying good things about you, and I rescued you from his power. **11** You crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho. The leaders of Jericho, as well as the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites, and Jebusites, fought with you, but I handed them over to you.

12 I sent terror ahead of you to drive out before you the two

Amorite kings. I gave you the victory; it was not by your swords or bows. **13** I gave you a land in which you had not worked hard; you took up residence in cities you did not build and you are eating the produce of vineyards and olive groves you did not plant.'

14 Now obey the LORD and worship him with integrity and loyalty. Put aside the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt and worship the LORD.

15 If you have no desire to worship the LORD, choose today whom you will worship, whether it be the gods whom your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living. But I and my family will worship the LORD!"

16 The people responded, "Far be it from us to abandon the LORD so we can worship other gods! **17** For the LORD our God took us and our fathers out of slavery in the land of Egypt and performed these awesome miracles before our very eyes. He continually protected us as we traveled and when we passed through nations. **18** The LORD drove out from before us all the nations, including the Amorites who lived in the land. So we too will worship the LORD, for he is our God!"

19 Joshua warned the people, "You will not keep worshiping the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God who will not forgive your rebellion or your sins. **20** If you abandon the LORD and worship foreign gods, he will turn against you; he will bring disaster on you and destroy you, though he once treated you well."

21 The people said to Joshua, "No! We really will worship the LORD!" **22** Joshua said to the people, "Do you agree to be witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen to worship the LORD?" They replied, "We are witnesses!" **23** Joshua said, "Now put aside the foreign gods that are among you and submit to the LORD God of Israel."

24 The people said to Joshua, "We will worship the LORD our God and obey him."

25 That day Joshua drew up an agreement for the people, and he established rules and regulations for them in Shechem. **26** Joshua wrote these words in the Law Scroll of God. He then took a large stone and set it up there under the oak tree near the LORD's shrine. **27**

Joshua said to all the people, "Look, this stone will be a witness against you, for it has heard everything the LORD said to us. It will be a witness against you if you deny your God." **28** When Joshua dismissed the people, they went to their allotted portions of land.

29 After all this Joshua son of Nun, the LORD's servant, died at the age of one hundred ten. **30** They buried him in his allotted territory in Timnath Serah in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. **31** Israel worshiped the LORD throughout Joshua's lifetime and as long as the elderly men who outlived him remained alive. These men had experienced firsthand everything the LORD had done for Israel.

32 The bones of Joseph, which the Israelites had brought up from Egypt, were buried at Shechem in the part of the field that Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for one hundred pieces of money. So it became the inheritance of the tribe of Joseph.

33 Eleazar son of Aaron died, and they buried him in Gibeah in the hill country of Ephraim, where his son Phinehas had been assigned land.